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EXCURSIONS IN INDIA.

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VOL. I.







MOUNTAINEERS OF THE HONOLULU

BY THE AUTHOR

THE HONOLULU

EXCURSIONS  
IN INDIA;  
INCLUDING A WALK OVER  
THE HIMALAYA MOUNTAINS,  
TO THE SOURCES OF  
THE JUMNA AND THE GANGES.

BY CAPTAIN THOMAS SKINNER,  
OF THE 31ST REGIMENT.

Wherein all entrance vast and deserts idle,  
Mouth quivers, rocks, and hills whose heads touch heav'n,  
It was my heart to speak.

SHAKESPEARE.

SECOND EDITION.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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As the following pages scarcely deserve the important appellation of travels, I am anxious to present their being considered as such, by a candid avowal of my intention in writing them.

If certain readers should take up the volumes with the hope of finding a grave history of cities and their people, a regular diary of journeys through such a province, or visits to such a palace, or such a tomb, they will be sadly disappointed. If the name of the Himalaya Mountains should attract others to turn over the leaves in pursuit of scientific knowledge, and to seek for experiments on the atmosphere, disser-

tations on the natural productions of this vast range, or calculations on the heights of the various peaks, they will look in vain for such information.

Although, therefore, I may dissuade many from becoming my readers, by a declaration of what they will *not* find, I am apprehensive that it will not be so easy a matter to invite attention by an announcement of what the book *does* contain. I shall, however, make the attempt.

On first arriving in India, I was struck with the air of romance in which every thing seemed to be decked :—the sparkling river, with its picturesque and various vessels, from the rude boat with its roof of thatch, to the golden barge of state ; the graceful palms, and the matted villages that they shadowed ; the stillness of the pagodas ; the men and animals, whose appearances were so new to me ; and the aromatic odour shed around by the herbs and plants ;—indeed the merest trifle, for a time, was magnified into a most wonderful occurrence ; and every scene through which I had to pass was invested with as much consequence as it would

have become Don Quixote to have attached to it. I fancied, therefore, that my personal adventures, even to the "sayings and doings" of those about me, would possess sufficient interest to excuse me for making them public.

But when familiarity had bred some degree of contempt, and the "nothings" that my imagination had so "monstered" found their proper level, I resolved to think no more about them.

When, however, I had been some time absent from the scenes that had made so much impression upon me at first, I found that they recurred to me, "ever and anon," in all their vivid reality. I could not resist, therefore, selecting from my manuscripts such portions as I considered worthy of publication.

I have simply endeavoured to give, as correctly as I was able, a sketch of what every European, in India, is likely to experience; but such as none unacquainted with that country can be familiar with. I hope, however, the pictures I have ventured to draw, if they should not be considered skilful paintings, will at least be esteemed tolerable likenesses.

With the exception of the mountain tour, the "Excursions in India" contain no very regular journal. The other journeys were taken at different times, and for the accomplishment of different objects: so that, should my narrative possess no other recommendation, it may at any rate claim that of variety.

As the researches of many able men within the mountains whence the Jumna and the Ganges take their rise are already familiar to the public—to all at least who take any interest in such details—I considered it quite unnecessary for me to make any scientific observations. I am only desirous, from the great delight I myself experienced from the contemplation of the extraordinary and inconceivable beauties that presented themselves to my attention, to interest others, who are not likely to witness their splendours.

T. S.

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## EXCURSIONS IN INDIA.

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### CHAPTER I.

Voyage of a fleet from Calcutta through the Sunderbunds to  
Dinapore.

IN the early part of February 1826, we were ordered up to Dinapore by the river. The Hoogly at this season is too shallow in the upper part of it to allow the passage of large boats, and it was necessary to pass into the Ganges through the Sunderbunds. The noise and confusion upon the embarkation of a single person for a river expedition in the regular course, are beyond all belief; what must it be when a regiment is undergoing a similar preparation? We were encamped on the Glacis of Fort William to the Ghaut side, and were conveniently situated for superintending the operation. It was a month after the order had been

given before the boats could be procured : the officers were obliged to hire their own, but those intended for the men were pressed by the commissariat ; and every day, vessels with most unwilling crews were swept up to the point of embarkation. A board of survey sat constantly, to report upon them, and many boatmen were, for the first time in their lives, well pleased at their barks being declared unfit for sea : there was no chance of re-considering the matter, they were off the moment they heard an unfavourable opinion of their vessels.

When, at length, the boats were all ready, the crews were found to have deserted, and, an impressment was again to take place. With budgerows, horse boats, baggage boats, cook boats, hospital and soldiers' boats, the scene was the most extraordinary that can be conceived. Every officer had a sort of Noah's ark attached to his budgerow, and the uproar to fill it with its various animals was terrible. unwilling horses, and obstinate cows, with goats and sheep, running in all quarters ; men, women, and children, of all colours and costumes ; carriages, gigs,

palanquins, coops of poultry, ducks, geese, and turkeys, scattered about, cackling and hissing with all their might, were to be seen in every direction. Until we were fairly launched, I do not think any person seemed to be perfectly possessed of his judgment, for every thing in this country appears to be devoted to the most irretrievable confusion, when a move, or a change of any description, is about to take place.

I can easily conceive why a native army is defeated by so much smaller a force than it is always composed of: if among two or three thousand men only the wildest tumult attends a peaceable expedition, what a scene must a retreat be, when the numbers are swelled to hundreds of thousands! I have seen a dozen natives standing round a cask, their eyes fiery with passion, their voices heightened to a discordant yell, their arms waving about, and every sinew stiffened with rage, because they differed about the best way of shipping it. As the water of the Sunderbunds are salt, and it is not easy to land in any part of them, we were obliged to lay in fresh water as if preparing for

a voyage to sea. It was with great pleasure, indeed, that we received notice that all was ready for departure.

Our fleet amounted to at least three hundred boats of all denominations, from a sixteen-oared budgerow to the smallest that skims the river. We followed in the order of companies, each squadron distinguished by a flag of its own, the hospital bringing up the rear with a broad black pennant. At Kidderpore we entered Tolley's Nullah, which was cut by Colonel Tolley, of the engineers, to connect Calcutta with the Ganges during the dry season of the year; its great utility is amply proved by the revenue it yields to the company, and the immense crowd of boats upon its surface. It was with great difficulty that our long line could pass through it, for we were obliged to follow each other in single boats. The banks are well inhabited on each side; there are many European houses near the canal, too, the gardens of which slope down to its side, where the bamboo droops over the water, with all the grace of the weeping willows over our own streams; the bamboo has,

however, a much darker leaf, and grows more closely together, making, I think, a thicker shade than willows usually do. Nothing can be more beautiful than a sail upon some of the rivers in Ceylon on that account; the one upon which Ruwanwella stands winds for some distance among hills which are covered to their summits with wood, while near the bottom of them grows an immense quantity of the most luxuriant bamboo, which gives a dark shade to the stream, that can only be justly appreciated by those who know what the rays of a tropical sun are, when shining upon an unsheltered sheet of water.

A long string of vessels, laden with wood, from the jungle of the Sunderbunds, was moored to one bank, and much the owners of it had to do, to keep their cargoes from being pillaged by the crews of our passing boats, who seemed to think that this was a glorious opportunity for laying in their stock of firing for the voyage. We necessarily passed close to them, and our dandies immediately sprung on board, and seized what wood they liked; the woodmen struggled to recover it, but each boat of the fleet, as it

gained the point of attack, sent forth a reinforcement, and a running fire was thus kept up during our progress through the canal; the people on the shore, who took great interest in the scene, rushed to the banks, and abused or upheld our people according to their own particular callings—the opposition, however, seemed the strongest, and we sailed out of 'Tolley's Nullah with the cry of "thief" in our ears, for it ran like wildfire along the banks, and whatever point we gained still the shout of "thieves, thieves," followed us. We did all we could to prevent the dishonour that was pursuing us, but without effect, for the moment we entered our cabins, the dandies, who had desisted awhile, sallied forth on their depredations with redoubled vigour. If the wood boats are obliged to pay an enforced tax of this description to every passing boat, they must have a great deal of their labour and peril for nothing.

There is a considerable degree of danger attending the occupation of wood-cutting in the wildest parts of the Sunderbunds, whence all the wood comes. The jungle is infested with tigers,

and many men, I have heard, are carried away by them. We formed so large a fleet that there was little chance of being disturbed by their attacks, although every night we were serenaded by their cries. The Sunderbunds are formed by the deposits of mud made by the river during the rainy season in its progress to the ocean, towards which it runs by innumerable streams. Although a dismal swamp in many respects, all is exceedingly beautiful, and we appear to sail through a flooded forest. There are no houses—no inhabitants, but wild beasts; but it is rich in the most magnificent trees. The natives, who are forbidden by their religion to cook any thing on the water, are forced to dine off parched gram, a description of pea, and used commonly as food for horses; for they dare not venture on shore. Two dandies were reported as missing at the hour of departure on the second morning of our voyage through this dreary region; they were known to have landed, and as they had no intention of wandering beyond the shore, their comrades supposed that they had been carried off by tigers; and indeed nothing is more pro-



hable. This circumstance has kept all the others to their stations, as well as a superstitious notion regarding the wilderness, which they imagine is the proper habitation of the devil upon earth. It is certainly well suited to his evil purposes, but I fear the busy haunt of man has more attraction for the prince of darkness than even this wild, which should be so congenial to his soul.

It is impossible to describe our course through the labyrinth of creeks and lakes; sometimes the trees rising to a great height from the water, rich in foliage and full in blossoms, render it truly beautiful. Our progress through them is very slow and dependent on the tides. The skill of the Manjees by no means accelerates it; we not unfrequently find ourselves in the midst of the wood dismayed by the branches. The pilots seem to vie with each other in steering as close as they can to the point of danger. I was this morning literally whipt out of my bed; the branches of the trees among which we had contrived to get, broke through the Venetian blinds of my budgerow, and, as my boat still moved

on, tore the musquito curtains off my bed, and flogged me out of my sleep. I rushed forth instantly, to resent the indignity, when the gelasies on the opposite side, as we bumped from tree to tree, played like the arms of a telegraph, and nearly knocked me down. When I reached the deck of the boat, the confusion was terrible; I found that almost the whole fleet had got entangled in the forest, the last boats having followed the leading ones, which, mistaking their course, were now obliged to thread their way out. The dandies were mounted on their roofs, endeavouring to cut away some of the branches which were tearing the choppers off them as fast as possible; the vessels were running foul of each other every instant, and many a crash of a broken plank was heard; while the sound of voices, English, Irish, and Bengalee, mingled their discord. The wildness of the scene, the intermixture of the boats, the ignorance of our situation, and the quarrelling of all parties, made really a savage picture. We were at length extricated, singularly enough, without an accident, although many vessels bore the marks of

hard service. The extent of these swamps reaching to Chittagong from Comercolly, the first point on the main river, is so great, and their intricacies so bewildering, that it would be impossible to trace our course but in a general description :

“ Our understanding traces them in vain,  
Lost and bewildered in the fruitless search,  
Nor sure with how much art the windings run,  
Nor where the regular confusion ends.”

One of the most striking features in Bengalee navigation is their indifference to running foul of each other, that is to say, as to consequences—for the fellows make a terrible uproar on the approach : they never look, after a collision, to see if any accident has happened, but push on when they have finished their scolding, taking it for granted that all must be well. I had some misgiving of this apathy at first, and examined, as well as I could, the planks of my horse and baggage boat when I perceived that they had been bumped.

At night we were all anchored in clusters, as close together as possible, and at every action of the tide were huddled still closer. We fortu-

nately had very fine weather, and the moon shone upon us each night. Our boats were so entangled that we appeared to form a mass of cottages that had been swept away in a flood, to which the woods around, half buried in water, added a stronger resemblance. With fewer trees, such might a village of Egypt seem during the inundation of the Nile. The passage was much more tedious than a sea-voyage of double the time.

It was not till the thirteenth day that we were able to land, as long a time as might have carried us from England to Gibraltar. The first habitations we reached were the salt-factories of the Company, salt being a most productive branch of their revenue. The country, although clear, was still wild and dreary; a few huts were scattered about, whose inhabitants gained an uncomfortable support from their own exertions. I observed no cattle, and the poor cottages rather heightened the desolation of the scene, as a single tree in the desert increases the feeling of solitude. After passing the salt station, we crossed a little stream by Gopaulgunje to Colna, thence wound away past Mahmudpore and

Bosnah, till we arrived at Comercolly, the rivers upon which those places stand are so winding that we often appeared to be sailing on a lake perfectly land-locked : and on one occasion we went literally round a basin formed by the singular wanderings of a river. Their banks are not very thickly inhabited, although they flow across the Delta of the Ganges; the villages are merely of mats, with a few palm and plantain trees about them.

Comercolly is a very extensive silk factory, and a great many people are employed at the work ; the skeins were all spun and the workmen were employed in winding them off. Under a long roof was a line of coppers full of hot water, in which the silk was placed with reels attached to each, and the winding was managed with more celerity than I have seen it either in Italy or Sicily. In the village were a few brick houses whitewashed, but the streets generally were composed of huts of mat very neatly thatched, and so clean, that I could scarcely fancy they were really occupied. They seemed to be placed there as models, and re-

mined me of some scenes that I have witnessed in the commencement of a pantomime before the "conjugation dire" takes place, that changes their whimsical inhabitants into clowns and harlequins. Comerecolly, however, is even superior in picturesque effect to such scenes.

Soon after we quitted this place we experienced the first north-west gales, and were destined to meet with a return of them every evening for at least a fortnight; they always prevail in the month of March, at the 10th of which we had arrived without seeing the Gauges. The hurricanes are magnificent, both in their approach and retreat, but somewhat uncomfortable during their operation. Our boats were moored on the first night we experienced one beneath a high bank of soft sand, that threatened every moment to fall upon us; wherever purchase could be found for a rope one was fastened, so that the vessels were in a line, and made fast from every possible quarter. The sky had been some time darkening; we were prepared therefore for the onset. Clouds of dust announced the approach, and filled our budgerows and the thatched boats, which rocked

up and down as if they had been at sea, and bumped each other at a most alarming rate. The boatmen and servants were all drawn up in front cooking their food, "thinking no evil," when the storm burst; their fires were soon extinguished, their cooking pots overthrown, and their clothes and turbans cast down the wind. every one rushed on board as well as he could. It blew tremendously, and a violent storm of hail accompanied the wind; the hailstones were as large as hazel nuts, and rattled upon the roof of my budgerow at a rate that made me fear it would be beaten in; heavy rain and the loudest thunder succeeded, while the lightning played so vividly about our thatched boats, that they appeared to be on fire. It was dreadfully dark, but the bursts of fire from all sides lit up our situation splendidly. The lightning did not appear to break from any one quarter of the heavens, the whole firmament was flame! it seemed to open every moment and disclose a sheet of living fire. Many people were not able to reach their boats, and were seen clinging to the posts to which they were moored in

perfect despair. Now and then the cracking of a rope and the breaking away of a boat from its fastenings added to the confusion; several got loose and drifted into the middle of the stream; the natives screamed for assistance which could not be granted, for no one could tell precisely where they were driving to; every description of thing seemed to be travelling down the wind, hats, turbans, loose straw, broken cooking pots, lighted wood, and even fragments of the cooked messes. It is a complete tragic-comic scene. It generally lasts in full force about half-an-hour, and then dies gradually away, leaving the lightning, which melts into a soft blue flame, to flicker on the masts of the tossing boats for some time longer.

In the neighbourhood of Comercolly I perceived a number of large birds, storks apparently, from which I fancy the feathers are obtained that are made into muffs and tippets, and sold as Comercolly tippets in the bazaars at Calcutta; they are not unlike those we used to call Paddy birds in Ceylon, from their being always seen about rice fields, not, as an Irish soldier once imagined, from any rela-



tionship to the Emerald Isle. As our boats must now be towed, we find it extremely wearisome indeed. Sometimes we can only make three or four miles a day, calculating from the position of the leading boat at starting, and the last when halted. What can be more "melancholy, slow," than a string of three hundred vessels following each other round the windings of a river, bumping constantly against the banks, at the rate of half a mile an hour, the shores either covered with reeds so high as to prevent the possibility of seeing over them, or being shelving banks of white sand, dazzling the eyes, and flying like powder before the lightest breeze, at this season of the year, when the water is at its very lowest? Such are generally the varieties of the scenery.

On entering the Ganges, which we did soon after passing the village of Jellinghy, standing upon the river of that name, I was not impressed with the grandeur of its appearance, for it was yet very narrow. It undergoes a great change, however, in the space of a few months in this very spot: now the water is so shallow that even our light vessels are frequently

aground. My budgerow, which is of the common size, draws two feet of water, and it, as well as most others, stick in the mud at least once a day: the dandies instantly jump out and push them through it until they are afloat again. I have seen, at least, five hundred boatmen in the water at a time, struggling to get their boats off a sand-bank; they are indeed completely amphibious, and such a circumstance, with their shouting and screaming, gives a degree of animation to the scene that is quite delightful.

The first place on the Ganges that we halted at, was Bugwangola, a very pretty spot, where, on a wide plain, there were a number of mat huts, and a quantity of natives idling about them; its neighbourhood is thickly wooded, and it is esteemed a very fine sporting country. On the evening we arrived, we heard the sound of the gun, and heard that some Europeans were beating the jungle for deer, and probably for tigers. This country is, I believe, considered very famous for wild hogs, &c., as boar-hunting is one of the favourite diversions of the East; it is at this season of the year, "par excellence,"

the cold season, very much frequented by the lovers of this sport.

There are always a number of dull sailors in our fleet: it is frequently, therefore, several hours after the anchoring of the fleet, before the whole regiment arrives at the station for the night. The boats are moored in a line in their proper places, and immediately afterwards all parties scramble on shore, to rest themselves, by walking about; for the accommodation in the soldier's boats is singularly circumscribed. I do not think they have the breath of a foot apiece, in any one of them; and the sick men in the hospital are little better off. The situation of these last is very bad indeed. They occupy the same description of boats as the healthy, with a few inches more room. These boats are similarly thatched, and enjoy the same noise that others do. When the surgeons attend, they cannot stand upright; neither are they very well able to see, even in the day-time, so little light can gain admittance; and what is still worse, so little air. I wonder the government has not adopted a better transport

for the sick Europeans, who, indeed, in no place that I have yet seen, are so well considered as they deserve to be. Budgerows, properly arranged as wards, where their cots might stand as they do in an hospital, would not, I should imagine, be more expensive than the close and clumsy country boats. A budgerow of the same draught and tonnage would contain double the number that one of the present conveyances does, and might always be clean and well aired. I may be wrong, but I have never visited a sick boat on the river, without being deeply impressed with its great want of every thing that in this country tends to alleviate the sufferings of the soldiers.

One of the hospital boats, on the night of such a storm as that I have described, broke from its moorings, and drifted to the opposite bank of the river, from which it could not be recovered until next morning. It had lost almost all its thatch, and the rain poured through in torrents. There were seventeen men very ill in it; and eight of them died long before the passage was finished, although at the time there was no cause

of apprehension. I do not think this would have happened with a more suitable vessel.

I was much struck with the apathy of my boatmen, this morning, when a smart breeze was carrying us merrily up the river: it was a pretty sight; we were all scattered about a much wider surface than we had yet had an opportunity of sailing upon, when suddenly one of the soldiers' boats upset: it was immediately in front of mine, and there was quite room enough to have taken in sail in time to have brought me gently up to them. My dandies sat quietly on the deck, smoking, without either informing me, or attempting to move towards them. I was sitting in my cabin, and did not know their state, till I perceived it through my window. The roof was floating above the water, and men, women, and children were clinging to it. As mine was the nearest vessel, they must have been in despair on seeing me float carelessly by them. I ran to the deck, and was obliged to beat my people into action. Before we could take in sail, however, and put about, we had gone a great distance; and other boats coming

quickly up, rendered my aid of no use. There were seventeen Europeans, with four women and a great crowd of children. Only two, however, were drowned, who had not the patience to wait to be picked off the wreck. In attempting to swim ashore, they were swept away by the stream, which is exceedingly rapid, and lost. I asked my boatmen why they had not endeavoured to save the party; but with true Moslem indifference, for they were all Mahometans, they shrugged their shoulders, and answered, "What is it to us?—it was God's will." It was blowing very fresh at the time of the accident, and an order was given to take in sail, and continue easily. The construction of the vessels is so awkward, that I wonder they are not more frequently capsized. It makes one nervous to watch them in their course while under sail; they seem to have no seat on the water; and the sails are so flimsy, that they do not buoy them up in the least: the unwieldy roof catches the wind, and appears to sway all. From Bogwangola, until the blue hills of Rajmahal appear in the horizon, the scenery is dull and uninteresting. We

were never able to choose the spot for halting at, so much were we dependent upon the shallows and windings of the river. Sometimes we were fastened to a bank, so soft and high, that it was with difficulty we could climb up to its crest, and then we found the ground covered with reeds, that grew to such a height, as to render it impossible to thread our way through them. A worse situation, however, we were often doomed to experience, by the edge of a low, sandy bank, near which the water was too shallow to permit us to come within one or two hundred yards we were forced to wade through the water, or be carried by the dandies, to their very great diversion.

The sand was white and soft: it dazzled our eyes in the day-time to look upon it; and in the evening, if we sought a walk, we sunk nearly to the knees in the performance. These low banks, along which our boats stretched for an amazing distance, were intersected by creeks and bays, which in a great measure prevented communication. Some one boat was often left forlorn by the point of a peninsula, at the time the

hot wind was blowing the sparkling sand about, so as to make it a service of danger to reach it.

We were in too great a crowd to have much intercourse with villages, or their inhabitants; and indeed our anchoring in the neighbourhood of one, was a signal for all its people to take to flight. "*Sauve qui peut*," seemed to be the universal cry; for men, women, and children, were seen scampering, in all directions, from our vicinity. I must confess that, in appearance, we were very formidable and appalling: but, in reality, I am happy to say, quite the reverse. The men of course would not be permitted to offend in any way against the natives, even were they disposed to do so, which I do not think they are. After the panic has a little subsided, the people return with great caution, surveying our movements with as much jealousy as they would the recreation of a herd of tigers; and it requires a great deal of boldness in the women, to bring their pitchers to the streams, or a great deal of curiosity; for many a sidelong glance, from the drapery that should conceal their faces, declares their natural wish to see and to be seen.



In the early part of our voyage, one afternoon, a little before dark, while we were standing in a group by the banks of the river, a large deputation from the boatmen, with downcast eyes, and cringing features, their hands joined in a supplicating position before them, drew towards us, as if some most important representation were to be made: the great body of the dandies, their constituents, followed at a humble distance. An old man opened the case, and complained, in bitter terms, how every day their meals were destined to pollution! "Whenever we sit down to eat our dinners," he continued, "the 'gorelogue' (the white men) walk carelessly by; not only cast their shadows over them, but absolutely touch them with their feet! We are defiled!" he exclaimed; "Ghureeb pur war! the poor man's provider; we are your slaves, your children; you are our fathers and our mothers!" This oration was taken up by all the men around him; and the great body, which had now drawn closer to us, listened with interest to the conversation. No one, I hope, would be inclined to ridicule pre-

judices, sincerely adopted, however absurd; but it was difficult to refrain from a smile at the fear of starvation they so eloquently described, from our own accidental contact with the rim of a cooking pot. They were soon relieved from their apprehensions, by an assurance that the men should be cautioned not to approach within a defiling distance of their food. I do not think the men very clearly understood the objection to their baneful touch. "For sure!" I heard some say, "I would not eat his nasty mess, if he would pay me for it!" And when one of the boatmen broke the dish which a soldier had touched, and threw its contents, his only food, into the river, they were indeed struck with wonder. "Do they put tricks upon us, with monsters and with men of Ind?" seemed a riddle, that all were anxious to have solved.

These poor people dine under the same alarm that the Trojans felt from the Harpies; they know not when their meal will be taken from them: to hesitate between sin and starvation is a sad matter for a hungry man! They generally prefer the latter alternative; and would,

I firmly believe, rather die than break one particle of the outworks of their creed: the main points they are as prone as their Christian brethren to overlook. A friend of mine paid a visit to an acquaintance, on board a ship lying at the Sandheads, and took his Sirdar with him, a most scrupulous Hindoo. Very violent weather came on soon after they had boarded the vessel, and they were not able to leave it. Intending only to remain a few hours, the native servant had carried no food. Nothing, however, would induce him to touch a morsel on board, nor would he drink a drop of water. The storm continued some days, and he was nearly starved. He lay on the deck, in the most miserable plight. The sea was too rough to catch fish, the only food, of all they had, not forbidden. At length the wind abated, and a fish was caught: with all the good-nature of a sailor, a midshipman ran to him with it—alas! his touch had polluted it, and the Hindoo scorned it; and even if that difficulty had been overcome, as he had no strength to cook it himself, he could not have touched it. He was left, therefore, to

perish in his delusion : but, fortunately, before he was quite gone, his master was able to leave the ship, and he was carried, wretchedly ill, to Calcutta. The instant the boats are moored, the boatmen and servants, amounting to several hundreds, arrange themselves in groups, in one general line, and light their fires, and cook their dinners. Nothing can be more animated than the scene ; and as the night sets in—for we usually take up our ground a little before dusk—our position is plainly traced, in all its windings, by the blazing fires.

On the branches of some high tree in the neighbourhood, the sacred animal is doomed to fall, for our profane appetites. The butchers, who are positively a frightful race, carry on their operations by the flames of a large fire, beneath the boughs on which the carcasses are hung ; while the jackals, who have been lured from afar by the smell, yell with delight at the prospect of a feast. Vultures, of two or three descriptions, sit pondering their chances in the distant trees ; and dogs sneak up from the villages. Never can the habits of the two nations

be more strongly contrasted :—the simple fare of the Hindoos, by which they sit, trembling lest we approach it too near, stretching their hands over it, and warning us, with a most imploring “ Sahib !” to let them feed in peace, and the really savage scene that is acting beneath the trees, the bright flames of a fire, that from its size resembles a pile for sacrifice, casting their light upon the fierce countenances of the butchers, who, stripped naked to a small cloth about their loins and smeared with blood, seem to take thorough pleasure in their office.

The beautiful scenery in the neighbourhood of Rajmahal was delightful to us after the long and dreary voyage to it. We anchored close to the ruins of its palace, the building of the Sultan Sujah, and took possession of a marble chamber that overhung the river. We had the advantage of a moonlight night, and nothing could surpass the beauty of the scene : I may say, as Sir Walter Scott sings of Melrose Abbey :

“ If thou wouldst view fair Rajmahal aright,  
Go visit it by the pale moonlight.”

. . . . .

“ When buttrees and buttrees alternately,  
Seemed framed of ebony and ivory.”

The room in which we witnessed the "cold light's uncertain shower," was of white marble, inlaid with Arabic characters of black ; it was of a good size and in a perfect state, standing about fifty feet above the river, and looking upon the distant hills. This is the only part of what must once have been a very large palace, now remaining entire ; the rest is made up of ruined halls and chambers, the latter, as they generally are in native buildings, however grand, small and low. Some of the band, inspired I suppose by the scene, had carried their keyed bugles into its deserted halls, and by their sound converted it almost into a scene of romance. The river in the rainy season sweeps close by the ruins, and adds materially to their beauty. At this time the water is low and quiet, the palace is within a wilderness—from without it appears embosomed in trees. The town of Rajmahal is situated at the foot of the pass of Terriagully, which leads over the mountains.

The next place we anchored at was the base of a hill called Parahatta ; many caves are excavated in its bosom, and near its summit stands a

temple, to which a winding path leads through a tolerable wood. From the summit of this hill there is a very magnificent prospect; to the south are extensive plains covered with cattle, and the north is bounded by the hills of Rajmahal; the river winds below; at the foot of the hills are deep and variegated woods, and some white bungalows, belonging to indigo planters, shine from among them.

We halted a night at the village of Siclygully and at Pattergotta, both delightful places; thence the river winds beautifully round a wooded hill to Colgong. This is the first part of the river in which I have observed rocks, which, in many places, particularly at Pattergotta, extend some way into the stream. We had a gentle breeze to carry us past a rocky island in the centre of the river opposite Colgong, and as our various little vessels crept quietly from behind it, as it were, one by one, and then stretched over the surface of the stream, they formed a scene of beauty not often met with in the tame and nearly unvarying voyage of the Ganges. We are generally apt to associate safety

with river navigation, if there be no other advantage attending it, but this is not a constant companion here; the cooking boats—very essential ones by the bye—being the smallest, are frequently in imminent peril, and two or three have been completely lost. Our floating kitchens indeed afford considerable inconvenience; they are much slower sailors than the budgerows, and it is not unusual for a hungry party to wait in anxious suspense for hours before the lagging dinner can reach it. Our budgerows are sometimes able to gain the northern side of a broad creek, while the cook boats stick in the sand in the southern; the only consolation to be found is in a view through a telescope of the curling smoke which should be from the fire that is cooking your dinner. I should be sorry indeed to be the captain of one of these essential attendants. Their masters, whose anger is quickened by hunger, are not prone to listen patiently to the excuses that they may make for not arriving in due time, and woe betide the man who rules the roast of an epicure.

The hour of breakfast is an animated time: it happens usually when in progress, and when



under sail the khitmutgar of each vessel stands on the poop and calls with a loud voice, "Hazree lao!" while the sails are shortened: the call is soon answered from the cook boats, whose crews strain every nerve to reach the destined point, cheering themselves with a wild song, "Hazree lao;" the last word sustained till the breath fails, echoes along the banks as loudly as the muezzins call to prayer, and frequently with as much sweetness.

It is now the month of April, and we have entered the province of Bahar, and have certainly left the greatest beauty behind. The villages of Bengal are more picturesque, and surrounded by a greater variety of oriental trees and plants. It is easy to perceive a change in the people very soon after you quit Rajmahal: they are of larger stature and more manly in their appearance, are to be seen tending their cattle with large sticks, and preserve a gravity of manner that gives them an air of great superiority over the Bengalees, among whom there is generally a fawning manner and effeminate figure, to which the mode of dressing the hair, and the

fine muslin robes of the men, give them additional title. The women have altered their dresses too ; in Bahar they are more generally clad in blue cotton, in Bengal almost always in white ; the rings and bangles with which they are decorated, are as numerous and as heavy in appearance, however, as those of the former province. During the last month the festival of the Hooli was performed, to celebrate the arrival of spring ; and although by the banks of the river, away from any town, its votaries were not the less gay : the tom-toms which had been kept close until then were dragged out, and very soon announced their presence.

It seemed to be a period of universal licence, and the great humour of the carnival consisted in their pelting each other with red powder, which was moistened for the occasion. Every person who passed within reach of a handful was sure to obtain it ; and towards the evening, when a great many had forgotten the temperance of the Hindoo, parties bathed from head to foot in blood, as it seemed, wandered about the banks to sprinkle all who had not yet been suf-

ficiently coloured; while others sat in groups singing and drumming most vehemently. It seemed as if they had a just right to scatter it over all things as well as persons, and the servants ventured to perform the ceremony to their masters' boats, and to seek presents by offering the same courtesy to their clothes. The European soldiers, who are always ready for such amusement, were nothing loath to share in it; and, for the few days it lasted, we appeared to be a camp of savages.

In the beginning of April we began to feel the hot winds. As we were completely novices in the East, we had not prepared against them. It is impossible to conceive any visitation so severe; they generally begin about ten o'clock in the day, and blow sometimes so violently, that we are not able to advance, while moored perhaps to a low bank of white sand. The heat is so excessive, that it is misery to move, yet the budgerows rock so violently as to prevent the possibility of being still a moment. Clouds of sand drift about and enter our rooms at all quarters. The miserable natives sit without,

quite overcome, to be powdered by them as they fly. All has so withering an aspect—the earth so dry, the trees so blasted, and the people, like saquirs whitened for penance, seem to have no life in them: all natural moisture locked up, they appear as if suddenly turned into stone like the inhabitants of the enchanted town on the coast of India, in the *Thousand and One Tales*. It sets the teeth on edge to look at them.

Without tatties to temper the air, the cabins of our boats are like furnaces; through every crevice the hot sand pours in; my table would serve for the desk of an Indian school, where the scholars might find ample dust to trace their letters in; every thing I touch grates from the sand. If I venture to look out, the wind is like the breath of a volcano; my hair almost pricks my fingers as I touch it, so dry that “each particular hair does seem to stand on end.” Towards the end of this month these winds blow strongest; it is difficult to conceive the arid aspect of the country during their prevalence; we can fortunately not judge by any of the changes that take place in our own green fields

or "good green woods." They cease about the beginning of June, when the earth is relieved by a slight fall of rain, which lasts ten days or a fortnight; an interval of most oppressive heat then occurs, when the periodical rains begin their course; before the first fall the earth is as parched as the desert; large fissures present themselves at every thirty or forty yards; the rivers are at their very lowest, the tanks and lakes nearly dried up, or choked with sand; there seems to be no vegetation, as if such a season of rest had been purposely designed for nature, in order that it might gain strength for its luxuriant productions through the remainder of the year.

This period is not unhealthy when proper precautions are observed; but situated as we were, constantly exposed to its influence, it could scarcely be otherwise; so before we had reached Monghyr, where on the 20th of April we arrived, the cholera morbus broke out in our fleet and reduced it terribly. Many of the Europeans died as well as the natives, and no evening passed without a funeral. The dandies were either thrown overboard or deposited by the

banks of the rivers to feed the vultures and the jackals; our own men were more decently buried in such graves as could quickly be scooped in the sand. Towards the end of April the disorder assumed a more alarming appearance, and every hour somebody was seized. Each officer was provided with a mixture, the principal ingredients of which were laudanum and brandy; and, in order that no time might be lost in making for the hospital boats, every vessel on board which a man might fall sick, was desired to bear down upon the nearest budgerow for assistance, when a wine-glass of the cholera mixture was administered.

It was a melancholy sight to see five or six boats at a time draw out of the line and hasten towards the nearest officers in their rear! The moment the draught was received the disease in some measure seemed stayed, and the sick boat dropped quietly down to the hospital. It never was considered contagious, nor was any precaution used to separate the affected from the healthy; and we did not find that the remainder of a boat's crew was seized in consequence of any

one of them having been attacked by it. It committed its ravages indiscriminately through the fleet. A native on board my budgerow died of the complaint in the course of a few hours, and although all the others were lying around him, it was not communicated to any of them. It has always seemed to me to be confined to particular spots: during the month of October, while we were in Fort William, the men who occupied one end of a lower room in the barracks were seized with it, while in every other part of the building they were perfectly healthy. This room had been undergoing repair, and was not properly flagged: the upper one of course was boarded: this circumstance proves it to have been entirely local; for there was a constant intercourse between all the parties, and it was not conveyed to the other quarters. It at length became general in the Fort, which at that season of the year, the period of the breaking up of the rains, it usually does.

A regiment of British soldiers on its march from Berhampore to Calcutta, halted one morn-

ing in the neighbourhood of a morass, and in a few hours afterwards several men were attacked with the cholera morbus, always the attendant evil of such a place; the commanding officer immediately struck the camp, and moved to about seven miles further on; here the ground was drier and clearer; the sick men recovered, and there was no further appearance of the disease. I am not very certain what the opinions of the faculty may be in the East, but as no precautions are taken against contagion, I conjecture they do not consider them necessary.

I shall never forget the afternoon of our arrival at Patna; the cholera had been raging some time amongst the native population, and all the dead bodies seemed to have been placed on a clear spot without the city, and under the walls of some rich man's palace.

The hot wind blew very violently, and we were long within sight of this place without being able to reach it; the water was very low, and several dead bodies that had been washed from the bank by the river were stranded on the shallows in its centre. It was the 1st of May,



and corruption was most rapid; every breath of the sirocco blew poison; the scene was indescribable; bodies floated sometimes against our boats, for they were all nearly aground, and remained under the bows for an hour at a time, while others swam uninterruptedly down the stream, with flocks of birds upon them; little could be heard but the noise of the vultures tearing off the flesh with their beaks, while the crows jangled in their quarrels for the morsels that fell from them.

About sunset we reached the shore, but alas! could get no further than the burial-ground, along the edge of which we were obliged to moor. It was strewn with skulls and "dead men's bones," and the air was pestilence itself. The jackals and the wild dogs skulked away from the mangled limbs as we approached, while the vultures, the very sight of which speaks of the charnel-house, rose from the half-eaten body, and hovering for a moment above it, like evil spirits, descended to the completion of their horrible repast. There were a great number of the *Hargila* large storks, known by the name of adjutants in India,

from their measured step, stalking over the ground; they are always close attendants upon Europeans, and had come from the station of Dinapore to share in the feast that death had prepared for them; their "stealthy pace" seems well suited to a churchyard, over which, to their designs, they move like ghosts. There is something truly harrowing in the appearance of these gigantic birds in the twilight, or "the pale moonlight," knowing, as we do, the object of their ravishing strides.

All night, for we were forced to continue all night in this spot, the howling of the jackals was tremendous, and even the fires that were lit up by our numerous followers did not seem to scare them; there must have been thousands collected. So wild and so extraordinary a scene I never before beheld, and so uncomfortable a one, to some of the senses, I have no desire to see repeated. In so large a population as that of Patna any infectious disease must make great havoc, but especially such a one as the cholera morbus, against which there seems to be so few human remedies.

At daylight, on the 2nd May, we towed past the city of Patna, at the time its crowds were assembled on the Ghaut to bathe. The most animated scene possible is a native beach covered with bathers, as well as people of all descriptions; there were cattle, horses, and elephants; the latter, lying on their sides while their drivers rubbed them all over, appeared to enjoy the luxury beyond all around them. In the afternoon, we had the good fortune to complete our voyage on the Ganges, which occupied the very worst season of the year for such a trip. During the rains, when the water is higher, is certainly the most agreeable time for the excursion, but the most disagreeable event possible I shall ever consider the necessity of passing the months of April and May upon the river Ganges.

## CHAPTER II.

*A Trip to Delhi, with some Sketches of its passing Scenes.*

I ARRIVED at Delhi in the spring of 1828, and although it has been so frequently and so well described by others, there is something so attractive in the royal city, that I should pay it but an ill compliment if I quitted it without saying something of its beauties. Having sent my tents on the day before, I entered it at daylight by the Cashmere gate: the very name has poetry in it, and would tempt me to speak of the Mosque of Pearl and the Gardens of Shalimar, even if I had not an inclination to do so. There is so much in an eastern city to astonish the eye and to excite the fancy, for it is impos-

sible to pass through its streets without having the Thousand and One Nights constantly in the mind, that I despair of giving anything like a matter-of-fact description. When I see a veiled damsel passing through the bazaar with a porter at her back, I long to be included in her train, that I may hear adventures as singular as the stories of the Calenders, and the Ladies with the Two Black Dogs.

There is too much reality, however, in the ruins of former magnificence scattered around, to permit the imagination to enjoy too free a play. Delhi presents but a sad skeleton of what it once was. It is still worth seeing, and must possess a high interest for any traveller. It has been in considerable bustle during the two last years at this season, from the visits of the governor-general and the commander-in-chief. These circumstances, though apparently trifling, have been of much importance, as they have given "the unkindest cut of all" to the poor representative of the Great Mogul, in obliging him to forego some arrangements of etiquette in his reception of the former. Earl Amherst was the first British

governor that had paid a visit to the emperor, because he was the first to whom permission to sit in the presence had been conceded. The last of the House of Timour felt this indignity greatly, and is said to have shed tears when he saw the English ruler seat himself before him, and tremble for his throne, which he feared would certainly be invaded. I am not surprised that such inconsiderable matters should have affected him so much; all his power being gone, he had but the appearance of greatness to delude him with the belief that he was still a king, and that taken from him was enough to make him weep.

The Great Mogul has now no power but within the walls of his own palace, and that palace stands like a monument in the midst of the city, to show where all the glory and splendour of the East lie buried. However advantageous to humanity the present occupation of the East may be, it is a melancholy thing to see a long line of kings overthrown, and mosques, tombs, and palaces, showing a determination, as it were, not to survive it. Few countries have undergone more revolution and invasion than

India, and always from merciless conquerors (except in the last instance). Many Mussulman cities, formerly of great consequence, are now, as if the living had abandoned them to the dead, only discovered by the decaying tombs of their former inhabitants. Hindoo cities that have dwindled away to little villages have not that mark even of their original grandeur—their burial rite soon puts an end to all tales.

I approached the city from the east bank of the Jumna, and in crossing that river had a magnificent view of mosques and minarets glittering in the sun, and tombs embosomed in trees, not unfrequently overrun with ivy, and presenting more picturesque appearances, in a state of decay. The domes of the mosques and many of the tombs are covered with gilded metal, and shine most brilliantly. I found my tent pitched immediately under the castle walls, and opposite the Chandery Choke, or principal street. I was in the centre of bustle, but smothered by dust and tortured by flies. It is impossible to convey an idea of the numbers of these insects, and the intolerable nuisance attending them;

they are quite enough to keep you in a perpetual fever, and I have not yet arrived at that state of dignity or luxury to enjoy the constant attendance of an automaton, with a feather-fan, to keep my august person from being offended by their approach. I have frequently been amused by the unconsciousness of the men whose duty it is to procure a "gentle air" for their languid masters, or to exercise the most exalted office of controller of flies about the person ; they stand like statues by your side, their arms waving the fan up and down as if they had been set in motion by machinery. They often fall asleep in their office, but continue to perform its duties as if they had been wound up for a certain time. If you move from your position, though scarcely awake, they continue to follow you, and it seems as difficult to throw them off, as it was for Sinbad to release himself from the old man of the sea.

These, and a few other miseries, have procured for the East the reproach of luxury. I do not mean to vindicate it, but if it be true, we may indeed exclaim, how wretched is a life of luxury ! We might, I think, abstain



from such enjoyment without assuming great merit for self-denial.

The palace walls are very high and built of granite, the red colour of which give a singular appearance to them. They are surrounded by a deep ditch, and have two very magnificent gates. The interior possesses many vestiges of its early splendour, but mingled with so much shabbiness and dirt, that they afford more melancholy than agreeable reflections. The space within is very great, and has all the bustle of a little town. I had not the good fortune to be present at the visits of state that occurred between the commander in chief and the emperor, but there was in consequence an unusual collection of great men in the city, and as my position commanded an admirable view of the principal thoroughfare, I enjoyed the scene amazingly. This street is more than a mile in length and very broad; it is divided by what was once an aqueduct running through its centre. Here are the principal shops, and here is the principal throng of people. The houses are two and sometimes three stories high, and being extremely well whitewashed,

serve admirably to reflect the rays of the sun, and punish those who venture to pass them at mid-day.

Generally in the towns of the East the streets are very narrow, and little better than dark passages. In Grand Cairo, if you unfortunately meet a string of masked beauties upon donkies, you must make a rapid retreat, or resign yourself to be squeezed to a mummy against the wall, for daring to stand in their course, if your curiosity should tempt you to do so. The Chandy Choke, in Delhi, is, however, a great exception to this rule, and is perhaps the broadest street in any city in the East. The houses in it have occasionally balconies in front of them, in which the men sit, loosely arrayed in white muslin, smoking their hookahs; and women, who have forfeited all pretensions to modesty, are sometimes seen unveiled, similarly occupied. The din of so populous a place is very great, for every house seems as well furnished as a hive of bees. The population is nearly 200,000 souls, in an area of seven miles in circumference, which is the extent of the wall of modern Delhi. The great peculiarity

of an Eastern town is, that every thing is done in public : the people talk as loudly as they can, and sometimes, when engaged in unimportant matters, seem to be scolding each other in the most outrageous manner : the neighing of horses, the lowing of cattle, the creaking of cart wheels, and the "clinking of pewterers' hammers," for all occupations are carried on in a little open space in front of each shop, are beyond all endurance. The trumpeting noises of the elephants, with the groaning of the camels, varied occasionally by the roaring of a leopard or a cheator, (which animals are led about the streets hooded to sell for the purposes of hunting,) with the unceasing beat of the tom tom, the shrill pipe, and the cracked sound of the viol, accompanied by the worse voices of the singers, are enough to drive a moderately nervous person to desperation.

Among the natives of Mahometan towns, there seems to be a familiarity of manner that places every one in a moment at his ease. If a stranger enter the town and find a group engaged in any amusement he will not scruple to join it instantly, and take as much interest in its pursuit as if he

had known the members of it all his life; and then, perhaps, tendering his pipe to one of the party, or receiving one from it—a sure sign of intended hospitality—sit down and relate his history with as much frankness as if he had met a brother. The houses are generally irregular in their construction, and not unfrequently curiously decorated. Different-coloured curtains hang before the doors; variegated screens serve as blinds to the windows; and the custom of hanging clothes, particularly scarfs of every hue, pink, blue, yellow, green, and white, on the tops of the houses to dry, make them look as gay as a ship on a gala-day with all its colours flying.

The clouds of dust from the number of equipages, with the insects that surround the pastry-cooks' shops, are the most intolerable plagues of all. The rancid smell of the nasty-looking mixtures that are constantly in course of manufacture before you, with the general stench of the town, is a sign that it is seldom indeed that a "musk caravan from Koten passes through it." I think, in the *Arabian Nights' Entertainment*—

ments, there is a story of a princess threatening to have a confectioner beheaded, if he did not put pepper in his tartlets. However despotic it may appear in this lady, I cannot help thinking it a just satire upon the pastry of the East : for to season it out of all taste of its own fundamental ingredients, is the only way to make it palatable. This cook, I think, nearly fell a martyr to the honour of his profession, and refused to be dictated to ; and I do not believe any thing would induce his brethren of the present day to improve their confectionary.

Riding through the town requires much management, and some skill. It is necessary to shout, push, and kick the whole way, to warn the multitude to get out of the road. Occasionally you have to squeeze past a string of loaded camels, or start away from a train of elephants ; and if your horse be frightened at these last animals, which is frequently the case, it needs some ingenuity to avoid being plunged into the cauldrons which simmer, on each side of the way, in front of the cooks' shops. The fear is mutual very often ; and the elephants, in at-

tempting to escape from the approach of a horseman, may well be supposed to throw the whole street into a fine confusion. In one of my strolls through the city on horseback, I was nearly swept away by a species of simoom, caused by the progress, through the dusty town, of some important personage travelling in state.

When overtaken by such a storm, it is a long time before you can recover either your sight or position. The idle cause of all this tumult was reposing quietly in a shining yellow palanquin, tricked out with gilt moulding in every possible direction. He was preceded by a large retinue of strange looking beings, mounted on horses and dromedaries, and dressed in the most fantastic style. The animals were covered with scarlet housings, bound by gold lace, their bridles studded with shells; round their necks were collars of gold or silver, with little drops hanging to them, that kept time most admirably with their jogging measure. The camels were likewise adorned with bells.

The riders were in large cloth dresses, caftans, reaching from their necks to their heels, open only

on each side, from the hip downwards, for the convenience of sitting on horseback. These were fastened round the waist by a cotton shawl, either of white or green, in several folds. The common colours of the coats were red and yellow. A scimitar hung by their sides, and they bore matchlocks upon the right shoulders. A helmet, sometimes of steel, and sometimes of tin, pressed close to the head, in shape not unlike a dish-cover; a pair of jack boots reaching to the knee, and fitting quite tight to the leg; the loose trowsers gathered above giving to the thigh the appearance of being the seat of a dropsy; and a pair of spurs, resembling two rusty weathercocks, completed the equipment of these splendid retainers. Then followed a mass of servants on foot, some naked, and some with their limbs bare, and bodies covered. They carried sheathed swords in their hands, and shouted out the titles of their lord, at frequent intervals, in their passage through the city. They were followed by the stud, each horse beautifully caparisoned, and led by a groom: then came the elephants, with their showy trap-

pings, gilt howdahs, and umbrellas of gold or silver tissue. The palanquin, bearing the owner of these motley assemblages, at length appeared, and he was followed by a guard similar to the one that preceded him.

At a distance these processions look very grand, particularly the elephants and their castles; but when near, there is a great deal of tawdry and ill-assorted tinsel.

The horsemen of the party add greatly to the interest of the scene, by exhibiting their evolutions upon the line of their route. Some tilt at each other with their spears; and others affect to pursue, with drawn swords, the runaways of the party, who in their turn chase their followers back into the ranks. In the management of the horse, and the use of the spear, the natives are generally very skilful; but some of the irregular cavalry of the country excel all belief in these exercises. They will gallop at a tent peg, stuck firmly into the ground, and divide it with the point of the spear, not abating their speed in the least; and I have seen a troop of men, one after the other, break a bottle



with a ball from their matchlocks, while flying past at a racing pace.

The Mahometans of the neighbourhood of Delhi are, I think, a fine looking race of men ; but have something so debauched in their appearance and reckless in their manner, that a stranger is not likely to be favourably impressed by them. The contrast between a Mussulman and Hindoo village, which, in travelling, frequently present themselves alternately, is very striking. The mildness of the one party, with the impudent swagger of the other, show that they never can, as indeed they never do, assimilate. Where the same village is inhabited by people of both religions, they occupy opposite portions of it ; and the circumstance may always be known by there being a well at each end of it ; for the Hindoos would not draw water from the same fountain as the Mahometans, for all the wealth of this world.

Delhi, ever rich in showy figures and prancing horses, is particularly so at this time. Princes and ambassadors, in their most magnificent state, are constantly passing and repassing : and while

I sit in the door of my tent, observing them, I almost feel giddy with the confusion. A great concourse of merchants is attracted to the town by its being so full; and their assiduity in recommending their wares it is difficult to overcome. As most places are open, they invade you at all times; and in the course of a few hours, you may compare the produce of every quarter of the globe, as it lies spread before your eyes. The labour of packing and unpacking their goods seems to them to be a real pleasure: and it is in vain that you assure them that you do not mean to buy, for they will not forego the gratification of expatiating upon their excellence, with the probable triumph over your resolution, in at length persuading you to purchase.

The goldsmiths of Delhi are considered very excellent, and its embroiderers are famous over all the East. There is constant intercourse between Cashmere and this city; and the plain shawls are often brought here to receive rich borders of gold or silver; and I believe they are highly esteemed by the natives when thus adorned. I do not think, however, to an Eu-

ropean taste, they are improved. I could not avoid regarding those men, who had just arrived from Cashmere, with a considerable degree of interest—albeit they plodded their way from that delightful vale, without one thought beyond the bales they carried. Any thing approaching to a real connexion with a land, that has always seemed to me the creation of poetry or romance, gives me the greatest delight ; particularly as it is, in some measure, put without the reach of an European : the jealousy of the government of Lahore rendering it extremely difficult for a servant of the East India Company to cross the Sutleje, the boundary of the two states.

No description of buck is more entertaining, or more vain, than a Mahometan one ; and, in truth, they have much more in their outward finery to be proud of, than we have in the sombre-coloured dress of Europe : the caparisons of their horses, too, are so superb and various, that they have a great field for exercising their taste upon them.

When a youth of family is fully equipped and mounted for the course, he shows most

plainly, by his air and manner, that he is, in his own opinion, all in all ; the fashion of his turban and the curl of his moustache, are evidently the result of great pains. The horse is covered with costly trappings ; and what little of his natural coat can be seen, is as sleek as possible. His tail is long and sweeping, and his mane plaited with the neatest art, having points of silver to each length, to keep it in its place. He is taught to caper, to turn, and to plunge ; and is constantly exercised in these accomplishments, particularly when in a crowd ; for the great ambition seems to be, as with beaux of less showy exterior, to attract attention, and create a sensation ; and, as the scattered foot-passengers are seen flying in all directions before him, he is certain to attain his object.

It would seem absurd, if a stranger were to be set down in London, and describe the equipages as they passed him. I find I am doing very much the same : but if the ordinary scenes were like the processions on a coronation day, he might be justified. Delhi, at this time, presents as grand a spectacle every moment ; and some

stentorian voice, roaring out a string of high-sounding titles, generally ending with the imposing one of "Commander of ten thousand horse!" constantly rings in the ears, while, probably, the sum total of his cavalry is prancing about him at the time, two or three hundred at the utmost.

The great ceremony of a state visit consists in an interchange of presents; the proper quantity or expense of each being always settled previously, according to the rank of the visitor. To an individual, a royal introduction is rather an extravagant affair. According to your rank, you must present, on making your bow, a certain sum of gold, which, on being touched by the king, as a token of acceptance, is borne away by some attendant for the benefit of the "privy purse." Four gold mohurs, or eight pounds sterling, were the price of such an exhibition to me. It gains the pleasure of a hasty view of the court, and no more; and I hope it is no offence to the majesty of Delhi to say, that it is scarcely worth the money. If a sovereign be too much plagued by crowded levées, what an admirable mode this would be to limit the attendance!

After the palace, the most magnificent building is the Jumma Musjeed, or principal mosque. It stands upon a rock, and is ascended by two fine flights of steps. The area is very great, paved with marble, and has a fish-pond in the centre, supplied with water from a well cut out of the solid rock. Towards the east is the place of prayer. It seems to be generally crowded by beggars and travellers, and has many recesses round it in which they can obtain shelter.

The tombs in Mahometan countries are generally devoted to the use of travellers, as sometimes the porches of the temples are. No other nation, in the manner that theirs has done, has contrived to combine charity to the living, with a monument to the dead. The Mahometans, if they can at all afford that compliment to the departed, erect tombs over every one of their relations : from the simple white grave-stone, with a turban at the head of it, to the splendid mausoleums that now lie in ruins on the banks of the Jumna. Some rich men generally bequeath a legacy, to sink a well, form a tank, and plant a cluster of trees, in the neighbourhood of their

burial grounds, as if to attract future generations to visit them, that they may not fall into decay : indeed, in considering the comforts of travellers, the Mahometans are more essentially hospitable than any people on earth. They deem it very meritorious to bestow their wealth on useful works for the benefit of their fellow-creatures ; and, in their ideas, none can be of greater advantage than those that give shelter, and satisfy thirst, in a scorching climate. The many excellent tanks about a city, and the wells throughout the country, are generally the result of private charity. On the right bank of the Jumna, from Agra to Delhi, there is a well at every ten or fifteen miles apart, made at the expense of a beautiful princess, the celebrated Nour Jehan, I believe, who was distressed to find that there was so little comfort for poor travellers on the route, when she was journeying, upon one occasion, between these two cities.

The great adorer of Delhi was the prince who has left so splendid a trophy of his love on the shores of the Jumna at Agra, in the Tauje Mahal, the celebrated Shah Jehan. He built

the principal mosque, and made the beautiful gardens of Shalimar, and a great part of the city, the wall of which he also erected, with its seven gates. The gardens of Shalimar were the most splendid in the world, and are said to have cost a million of money. If this magnificent prince had left no other monument behind him than the glorious one to the beauty of his wife, he would have been sufficiently admired. The effort of his love is never likely to be excelled, and whether his Nour Jehan was the most lovely creature in the world or not, his determination that her tomb should never be rivalled is not likely to have been made in vain. In every direction within the limits of the city are visible, gardens, mosques, palaces, and tombs, in ruin, and falling to ruin; for now that the glory of the East has passed into other hands, the posterity of those who consigned such superb records to their care cannot afford to keep them in repair.

The burial-grounds, at a little distance from the town, are always romantically situated;



sometimes the tombs, overlooking a well-built tank, afford shelter to those who choose to come and meditate on its banks; and sometimes entirely covered by trees, give a deeper shade and greater quiet. Mahometan devotees are frequently found in their neighbourhoods. I met a man in the mosque to-day, who had earned a subsistence by lifting the veil off the tomb of a saint at Futtehpoor Sicra when any great person came to visit it; for this pious office he received two rupees a month, but had begun to find out it was a tiresome life, however meritorious, and was anxious to become my moonshee.

Generally, there are no inscriptions upon the stones, but when they do occur, they consist of well-selected texts from the Koran, and in that respect resemble our own churchyards, the moral warnings of which, I have no doubt, are as seldom attended with advantage. I have heard of a very simple epitaph on a tomb to Gonah Begum, a princess celebrated for her talents, which stands in the midst of a garden laid out by the Emperor Aurengzebe, at a village in

the province of Agra. It is equal to Sterne's "Alas! poor Yorick," and much before it; it may dispute precedence too with the "Alas! poor Yorick," of Hamlet; it is simply this; "Alas! alas! Gonah Begum!"

The Mahometan conquerors seem to have preferred the shores of the Jumna to the Ganges for their principal cities, and they have even erected one on the most sacred spot, as at Allahabad. The rites of the Hindoos, however, still go on, and the towns are known to them by their holy names, in spite of the high-sounding ones of the faithful. The river, although not so easily navigated, is perhaps more convenient for the purpose than the Ganges, from its being less wide, and not so liable to overflow its banks.

## CHAPTER III.

Departure from Delhi—The Floating Wreath—Description of a beautiful Festival, with the story of its origin.

On the 1st of April, I struck my camp in the royal city, and passing again through the Cashmere gate, proceeded to cross the river to the left bank of it. The boats for such a purpose are very convenient, and in some of them, camels, horses, goats, sheep, servants, and baggage, were all huddled together. In travelling in this country we make a most patriarchal appearance; and although the roads have but little to interest us in our progress, with so numerous and so motley a party we are never likely to be at a loss for amusement. It is singular how soon you are in perfect retirement after quitting

the walls of the city, and it is the same with regard to every town in the country. There is no suburb without the walls, and you might fancy you were drawing towards a deserted city till within the gates, when you are as suddenly in the midst of crowd and activity as if you had dropped into a bee-hive.

On stepping out of the boat, I observed a wreath of flowers that had been driven to the bank by the current; on attempting to pick it up, I found that it was attached to a little raft that had been upset. Remembering the custom of the Hindoo women, when their lovers are absent, which has been alluded to by Moore in the prose part of his "Lalla Rookh," I conjectured immediately that some forlorn damsel had been driven to despair by the shipwreck of all her hopes, in the frail bark before me. It is too interesting an event, in the absence of other adventures, to pass over quickly, and I have determined to take advantage of it in describing a ceremony, supposed to originate in such a custom, which I witnessed not long ago near the city of Moorshedabad. Cards of invitation were issued

by the Nuwaub to all the servants of the government in the neighbourhood of his palace, of which the following, to myself, may serve as a specimen :

"Most benevolent Sir; the delight of your friends; health to you!

"The anxious wish I feel to see you surpasses all expressions in writing. The desire of my heart is, that you will come into the fort on the evening of Friday next, in the month of Sufer Moosufur, and partake of an entertainment and supper it is my intention to give. Make me happy!

"May your hopes always be gratified!"

This invitation was written upon beautifully glazed paper sprinkled with golden stars, and well perfumed with attar of roses. It does not often fall to my lot to be invited in such flowery terms and I place great store by the royal mandate. I went up in the morning by the river, and passing the city, visited the preparations for the ceremony—a peep behind the curtain which, in matters of oriental finery, had better be avoided. By night, and at a distance, as every thing is constructed for effect, such scenes have a most imposing ap-

pearance, and the person who can look at them without thinking of fairies and genii must be woefully matter-of-fact indeed. I fancied I was enjoying some festival in the best days of Bagdad or Damascus. The pipes, the carpets, the ottomans, the dancing girls, all combined to favour the belief.

About eight o'clock at night I left my boat at a ghaut in front of the palace. In a clear space on one side of it several tents were pitched, very gaily decorated and brilliantly illuminated. Many of the company had assembled here, and the dancing and singing had commenced; the Nuwaub himself was just descended from an ivory litter, cushioned with crimson velvet and fringed with gold; large golden tassels hung from the corners of the pillows, and the poles which rested on the shoulders of his supporters were similarly adorned. A handsomely dressed servant bore a large umbrella of silver tissue above his head; its handle was of gold and the stick was ivory and silver. Many servants, bearing sticks of silver and gold, preceded him, among whom were some whose duty it was to proclaim his titles, a ceremony that

was performed at intervals throughout the entertainment. He took his seat in a handsome chair at the head of the chamber, when he received a richly gemmed hookah, placed before him on a green velvet carpet, splendidly embroidered with gold. His mouth-piece glittered with diamonds, and his fingers shone with amethysts and rubies. The person upon which all this finery was lavished, was short, ill made, and coal black ; he had the features of a negro, and possessed neither dignity of manner nor an easy address ; his expression was coarse and sensual ; his eye without intelligence, and his whole appearance denoted any thing but one of "gentle blood."

The floor was spread with a Turkey carpet, and European couches and chairs were placed around. The poles of the tent were dressed with flowers, and lights hung in festoons from one to the other. The dancing girls, with their assistants, the musicians, (if I dare give them that name,) were scattered in groups about the place. In every direction was heard the tinkling of their silver ornaments as they moved in slow and graceful circles, and at every point were seen

their variegated forms gently waving like a garden of tulips before the "sweet south." They were dressed in little jackets of white, open at the bosom and hanging loosely over the hips, with a pair of silken trowsers, red, or more frequently of plaid, of various bright colours, made extremely wide and almost concealing their feet, which, "like little mice peeped in and out," each toe ornamented with a silver ring, hung round with little sounding beads. Upon their ancles were large circles of silver with the same pendants, which are generally attached to all their decorations, and on which they exercise much ingenuity to make them chime with their motions. A red gauze petticoat with a deep binding of silver, made so large as to hang in many folds, was fastened round the waist by a silver cord with large tassels at the ends of it, and a scarlet or green drapery or veil, with borders of silver or golden fringe, passing over the head and falling across the bosom, hung in a point to the ground. From behind this screen they performed all the "coquetterie" of their dances, which indeed is all the dance seems designed for ;



covering the face with it at one moment, the head turned with a languishing air on one side, then drawing it away with an arch smile, and darting the glances of their dark eyes full upon you. After coming forward a little distance, their arms moving gracefully in concord with their feet in a species of "glissade," for all their steps are sliding, they sink suddenly and make the prettiest pirouette imaginable; their loose petticoat thrown by a quick turn out of its folds, and borne down by the weight of its border, encircles them like a hoop; they gently round their arms, affect to conceal their faces behind their screens of gauze, and then rising, bridle up their necks, as conscious that they had completely overcome you; their eyelids are always touched with antimony, which adds very much to the languor of their expression. They have armlets above the elbow, and bracelets from the wrist to where the arm begins to swell; around their necks are innumerable necklaces; a golden clasp with drops to it is fastened to a lock of hair which hangs down the forehead and nearly joins the brows; a small round piece of dark enamel

studded with spangles is pressed upon the division of the eyebrows ; a large ring with a small jewel in it hangs from one of their nostrils, reaching nearly to the chin ; they have rings in their ears and on their fingers, and a small mirror about an inch in diameter attached to a thumb-ring, completes their adornments. Their nails, both on the toes and fingers, are stained a pinkish colour with the juice of the henna.

The musicians who accompany these dancing girls are a debauched looking set of fellows, who beat the tom-tom and play on the most common Hindoo viol. They stand in a row behind the dancers, and not content with their instrumental noise, vociferate with all their might in concert with it. The singing of the women was lamentable enough ; the great merit seemed to be who could shout loudest, and no equal were their talents that it would be difficult to adjudge the prize. With the exception of the well known Persian air, "Tauza bu Tauza, Nuo bu nuo," they have very few good songs. They possess such admirable lungs that they are able to continue without diminution through a long night :

their screeching notes break in upon all conversation, and come upon the sense with so little harmony, that it is difficult to avoid rushing into the street with both your hands to your ears—an action which I detected myself performing much more frequently than my politeness justified.

About twelve o'clock it was announced that the festival was to begin, that the Bhearer was about to be launched; we adjourned in consequence to the palace. It is situated close to the bank of the river Bhaghirathi, a very holy branch of the Ganges, which breaks off from it at a place called Cossy, about forty miles above Moorshedabad, and mixing with the Jellinghy, flows past this city and Hoogly; there adopting its name, it runs by Calcutta to the sea.

The palace has two stories, and in the verandah of the upper one we assembled to witness one of the prettiest sights I ever beheld. The opposite side of the river was lined by a wall of bamboo, having towers at its flanks, and, at intervals between them, they were illuminated with many lamps of the talc, stained with a variety of colours for the purpose; it was intended to re-

present a fortress, and rockets were occasionally thrown from it. The side on which the palace stood was also illuminated, and as the fireworks were let off they threw their light upon many thousand spectators. The river is here about a quarter of a mile broad.

A loud shout suddenly drew our attention to a spot above the stream, where the river makes a graceful wind to the right hand, widening till it approaches the palace. A number of small lights covered the surface of the water, in which the populace seemed to take great interest; they were on little floats about a foot square, and more numerous than can be imagined. When they flowed near enough, we perceived they were decorated with flowers. At length a large raft, nearly occupying the breadth of the stream, made its appearance, and was hailed with a deafening acclamation; it was a fairy palace, and I attributed its erection to the genii. Aladdin had been rubbing his wonderful lamp. The raft was composed of plantain trees tied together; it formed a square surrounded by a wall; in the centre of each face was a

magnificent gate made of various coloured talc, and so richly illuminated as to exhibit more hues than the rainbow; at each angle were large towers similarly made and lighted; on the tops of the wall were pale blue lights, and lamps of all colours hung in festoons about it; in the centre rose a splendid structure also of talc, resembling a Chinese pagoda in its shape, and so brilliantly lit, that it would be impossible, unless all the colours of nature could be wrought into one picture, to portray it. On passing the palace many rockets were thrown from it, which were returned by the fortress on the other side. an interchange of fireworks was thus kept up for some time, that might have passed for a mimic engagement. The tom-toms and the singing rose to the highest pitch, and almost drowned the loud huzzaing of the people.

A turn in the river in about ten minutes concealed the magic building from our view, and it seemed to sink as suddenly as it had arisen. I have heard several origins for the ceremony; but as doctors differ, I may venture to adopt the one that pleases me most. It happened while

some Hindoo beauties were practising the pretty mode of fortune-telling, the allusion to which led me into the description I have just completed, that the king of Bengal was crossing the river to his palace, which was considerably below the position they had chosen to watch the vessels of their destinies, his boat upset, and being an expert swimmer, he was able for some time to keep himself above water. It was so dark, however, that after many fruitless searches for their master, his attendants gave him up to the Ganges. They could not see, and were returning home to lament the loss of the king, when suddenly the river appeared illuminated, and the servants beheld him in the last efforts of his strength. A number of little lights were floating safely down the stream, promising happiness to all parties; for the king was rescued, and the damsels received a favourable omen, from the steady progress of their barks. In gratitude to the custom that thus saved his life, the king established the beautiful ceremony of the Bhearer, for that is the name which it has received.

## CHAPTER IV.

Meerut—The Begum Sumroo—A Nautch—Fireworks—  
 Preparing to march—Scenes in a Camp—The Sick Master  
 —A Choleric Traveller—Some words of Thieves and  
 Thieving—Elephants - Horses—Smoking.

WITHOUT passing any place of importance worthy of notice, I arrived on the 2nd of April, in Meerut, from which place I had set out for Delhi, the largest military station in Upper India. Here every thing is too like England to require description. The houses are all excellent, there is much agreeable society, and the climate, for six months, as delightful as can be desired; balls, plays, and races, form the amusements, and are always admirably managed, and continue uninterruptedly throughout the cold weather. The lovers of the drama are not always able to see feminine softness depicted in as touching a manner as they may wish; for it

often happens that Lydia Languish possesses the dimensions of a grenadier, and the Romeo, who must bear his gigantic Juliet from the tomb, should have the strength of Hercules at least.

The great advantage of this station over those below it is in the excellence of its gardens. At this season of the year strawberries, grapes and peaches are ripe and in great plenty; the former grow here perhaps better than in any part of India, and I think fully as well as in Europe. The favourable season for them being but short, it is not easy to have a succession, and as they are all ripe within a few days of each other, many of them must be lost.

The military cantonment is some distance from the native city, and is spread over a large extent of ground. All around the country is a perfect plain. A very handsome church, the bungalows of the officers, surrounded by gardens, and occasionally shrubberies, with the barracks of the men, are the only objects that appear on its surface.

The principal building between those occupied



by the troops and the city, is the residence of the Begum Sumroo, a most celebrated and extraordinary lady. She is, I believe, eighty years of age, and in possession of more acuteness of intellect, and readiness of action, than any woman ever enjoyed. She was in her youth a celebrated beauty, and a dancing girl at Patna, when she captivated a Swiss adventurer in the native service, whose name has been corrupted into Sumroo. She has been the principal actress in many a strange scene, and on more occasions than one has placed herself at the head of her troops to lead them into action. Many of the stories told of her are so terrible, that I hope they may be, if not quite false, very greatly exaggerated. She obtained so great an influence over her husband, that he swore he would never survive her, and if any accident should cause her death, the moment it was reported to him should be his last, for he would instantly put an end to himself. She determined to take advantage of the oath her fascinations had drawn from him, and being anxious to get rid of him, drove him to commit suicide.

In the course of a march that they were making together at the head of their army, her palanquin being some distance behind his, she desired some of her people to surround her and burst into loud lamentations, while she directed others to rush in a frantic manner towards her husband, waving a bloody scarf, and cry out, "The Begum is dead! she has killed herself! The Begum is dead!" The unfortunate husband no sooner heard it than he put his rash vow into execution. When the Begum learnt that he had killed himself, she rose from her palanquin, and mounting on horseback, galloped up to her troops and desired them to obey her, for Sumroo was no more!

She is a very diminutive figure, and does not bear much of her commanding disposition in her outward appearance. She mixes a great deal in the society of the Europeans, and is indeed a Christian. She has built a handsome church at Sirithana, the capital of her territory, and keeps a Roman Catholic priest, an Italian, in her household. I do not think his situation likely to be very agreeable; for I understand she

not long ago discharged his predecessor for presuming to censure some crime that she had committed.

On occasions of ceremony she is always present, and is handed down to dinner or to supper by the highest officer of the party ; and if one might venture to caricature so august a procession, it would afford no bad subject. A woman of little more than four feet high, considerably bent by age, with a plain white muslin scarf about her shoulders, and in a pair of silk trousers, leaning on the arm of a splendidly dressed figure, surrounded by his brilliant staff, forms as ludicrous a contrast as can be imagined.

A few nights ago she gave a magnificent entertainment, at which a supper was laid out in tents in her ground, and fireworks were exhibited while we sat at table. The amusements within the house were the singing and dancing of the native women ; they were in greater number than I ever had the misfortune to see them before ; there were parties of them in every room, and in one particularly, which was not larger than twenty feet square, not less than

fifty were collected at one time, singing in concert in a frightful manner. The music of a forge with a thousand hammers at work would be delightful harmony compared to these scenes. The first burst of fireworks causes the greatest confusion. The visitors generally leave their equipages in charge of their servants, standing in the compound, as an enclosed space is termed in Bengal. The natives, always indifferent to the future, fall asleep and leave the horses to take care of themselves. The first flash sets them off in every direction: horses, gigs, and carriages, with elephants and palanquins, are at once hurled into the most inextricable mass; the horses, delighted with their liberty, show it in fighting, their shrill neighs giving audible intelligence of their warlike occupation.

The grooms, roused by the uproar, run half mad about the grounds, bellowing to the utmost of their strength. This din cannot fail to call their masters to the scene, who rush forth scolding and beating every unfortunate fellow that falls in their way. The fireworks still go on, crackers, squibs and rockets shooting through

the confusion. The ladies at length are drawn into the riot, and while the whole scene is lit up by the exhibition still in active play, instead of meeting for amusement, it seems as if some terrible calamity had called the inhabitants to one spot to perish in the flames.

It is a long time before order is restored, and it frequently happens that some of the horses have quietly returned home of their own accord, leaving their masters to get out of the fire as they can.

On the 3rd of April, having despatched my tents previously to the city of Muzzuffer-nuggur, I set off towards the fair of Hurdwar. As nothing can be done in the East without talking, so from the violent manner in which that is done, every thing appears to create confusion. The simple matter of loading camels, which the men engaged in have been exercising all their lives, seems to give them as much difficulty in the outset of a journey as if they had never before attempted it. One or two of my camels were rather young, and required more attention than usual perhaps, and by the uncomfortable

sensations they displayed at their burthens, I expected to see my goods strewing the path on my way to the first day's encampment.

The beginning was attended with a disaster that did not promise much better. It was with some trouble that the drivers succeeded in making the camel kneel to receive its load ; two large cases were suspended on each side, and on their tops, across the animal's back, was a coop full of poultry : as if that were not enough, the servants had swung pots, pans, and gridirons around its neck and about its flanks. When it arose, the jingling motion of the kitchen affairs, with the cackling of the poultry, seemed to astonish it not a little. It thrust out its long neck, and looking piteously for assistance, set off at a canter, with ten times the noise that had frightened it before. The uproar might well have confounded a more practised and discreet animal. Endeavouring to pass under a tree, as I anticipated, the whole load came to the ground, with the exception of the hen-coop, which stuck in the branches ; and having some of its bars broken, liberated its prisoners. A general pursuit, with

the usual shouting upon such occasions, took place immediately, and it was some time before all the runaways were collected. Once more arranged, however, they proceeded on their way, and in the afternoon of the 3rd I arrived at the camp, which was pitched in a fine clump of trees on the right of the road, and within sight of the town of Muzzuffer-duggur.

A large party were assembled here on their way to the Hurdwar, and it presented a busy scene, as such an encampment always does. At the further end of the tope in which we halted, is a tribe of native horse-dealers, who have been leading their animals through the country for sale, and are now on their way to the annual mart. They take advantage of our neighbourhood to show off their cattle, but without any success. It is not an easy matter to make a good bargain with these gentry; they possess tricks that our jockies would never devise. I remember a pony being brought into our camp for sale, in the neighbourhood of Cawnpore, and it appeared so gentle that several were anxious to purchase it: it was tried by every one, and in every way,

and was pronounced the most tractable of his race. It was bought, and in two days afterwards there was not a man in the camp that could ride it. It had been drugged with opium, and although the most wicked and obstinate creature that I ever saw, the dose that had been administered to it had perfectly subdued its vice for the time. An encampment in India is so picturesque a scene that it is impossible to refrain from attempting to describe it.

On the 4th we concluded our day's march within sight of the city of Deobund, and the spot we selected to pitch our tents upon was by the side of a clear basin of water beneath the shelter of some very large peepul trees; at a little distance from our ground are several avenues of trees as regularly planted as if they had formed the walks of some garden whose beauty has now passed away. In the branches are many birds, among which the clattering of the parrot predominates; for in a wild state, as well as in a civilized one, they seem to have more to say than any of the company they happen to be among. There are a few tombs, enclosed by a low wall,



and nearly concealed by trees and the various species of creepers in flower, that wind in all directions about them. A few saquirs halting on the road to Hurdwar, are sitting disconsolate within the shadow, and some of my followers, who meditate dining in solitude, are kneading their cakes and kindling their fires close by their sides; an operation that must be tolerably trying to their constancy, if fasting should happen to be in the catalogue of their self-mortifications.

The elephants and camels are in possession of the avenues, the former engaged in whisking the flies from their bodies, with branches that they wave around them, with their trunks; the latter, as patient as possible, crouching on all fours in the singular position they generally lie in. Many fires are blazing, and savoury messes are sending their steams through the air. From the great variety of castes and tribes into which our followers are divided, the dinner parties are as numerous as in the coffee-room of a modern club-house, and without the cold formality of the little tables. Groups of three or four are scattered about, preparing or enjoying their

simple meals; the Hindoos with their brass vessels of water by their sides, their heads bare, and their bodies naked, their constant mode of dressing, or rather undressing, for dinner, are beating out their dough with their fists, and exerting themselves in the work as if the power of eating their cakes depended upon the exercise they take in the cookery.

In the neighbourhood of the horses, which are picqueted in lines beneath the shadows of the distant trees, the grooms are engaged in their repasts, while the Mahometan servants, whose duty it is to attend to the meals of their masters, are busily occupied in preparing more substantial fare. What a striking contrast do the different modes of life, now collected before me, afford! and what a strange and unaccountable variety of human character, and of human weakness! Within sight of each other are the two extremes of taste—those who would rather perish than eat meat, and those who would most probably perish, if not permitted to do so. What a singular position must a reflecting Hindoo consider himself placed in! We exact from them implicit

obedience to our commands; and they render it cheerfully at the very time we are doing what is most odious to them—devouring the carcase of the animal they venerate! We must be in their eyes unclean, beyond the powers of all the waters of the East; and yet they are our humble slaves. With all this too they will throw away their meals, and hold it perdition to feed on them, if we do but touch them, by accident, in passing.

On first arriving in India, the European, who has never inquired into the customs of the natives, must fancy that he has reached a shore of madmen—for to perfect strangers they are a little ultra in their prejudices, and affect many scruples, for the sake of making an impression, that are not exacted by their religion. On visiting a sick friend in Calcutta, who had not long arrived in the country, I found him nearly exhausted on his bed, while a servant was bowing and cringing at the opposite end of the room, with the most grotesque assiduity. By the bedside was a little table with a tea-cup upon it.

“Help me, my dear fellow!” gasped the sick man, as I entered, in the most ludicrous tone of

despair; "can all this etiquette be necessary to remove a tea-cup? Oh, the splendour of the East! the splendour of the East!" I found that his bearer had been endeavouring to make him understand that he was not permitted to touch any thing that his lips had polluted, and had therefore declined to take away the cup he had just been drinking from.

There is a policy in this affectation of rigour before strangers, in which I think they generally overreach themselves. They hope, by establishing so many forbidden acts, to have less to do, and gain themselves a high character for honesty by showing themselves rigid in their religious duties. The youths to whom these hypocritical gentlemen fall, are seldom disposed to balance matters long, and without stopping to conjecture what may give rise to the absurdities, confute them by a species of argument that they are not often inclined to try the force of a second time. I am alluding only to the worst description of servants, who hang about the Ghauts at Calcutta, and attach themselves in such a manner to the new arrivals, that it is nearly impossible to shake them

off. When once established in the country, the followers that a kind master has about him, are honest, and I think much attached to his person and his interests. I, at least, for we should all speak from our experience, have found it so.

There are few people on the face of the earth about whom strangers differ so much in opinion, as the natives of the East. Doubtless our own dispositions weigh much more in the scale than we are ever likely to allow; and without showing any very violent partiality, I may venture to say, that in half of the cases where they are condemned, something wrong will be found to exist in the tempers of the judges. Some men assume, at once, that every native is a rogue; and I remember hearing of an officer, who had a custom, whenever he called upon his servant to render the accounts of his housekeeping, to place a large cudgel upon the table. It proved, I have no doubt, an admirable controller of his expenses:—“What is the meaning of this?” pointing with the finger of his left hand to the figures, with his right resting upon the stick—was the question, and accompanying action, at every item—“A

mistake—an error in the bill!” and the terrified attendant agreed, in trembling, to whatever diminution his master desired. That person could hardly be supposed to allow any merit to the servants over whom he thought himself obliged to establish such a reign of terror. The slight appearance of ill-humour—it may perhaps proceed from their apathy, which the men who are so treated display immediately after—speaks highly in favour of their dispositions.

On sailing up the Ganges, my boat happened to be moored by the side of a large budgerow, in which a somewhat choleric gentleman was, as I conceived, at rest; all his boatmen and servants, to the number, I dare say, of twenty-five or thirty, were sleeping, rolled up in their white shawls, upon the roof of the apartment in which he was lying, which rose like a poop above the deck. It was a beautiful night, and in the neighbourhood of Colgong, one of the most romantic parts of the river. I was seated on the deck, although it was past midnight, enjoying the scene, when my contemplations were disturbed by an unusual splashing in the water. On turning in the direc-

tion of the noise, I saw the unfortunate men leaping and tumbling into the river from the boat of my passionate neighbour, who was standing like a madman on the deck, brandishing a stick over his head. Never shall I forget the scene. He was not unlike Lieutenant Lismahago in his appearance. The moon lit up his bald head, for he had thrown his nightcap at one of the people, in a rage at not being able to reach him with his stick; and while he stood in the midst of the wild scenery around, with nothing on but his shirt, dispersing the sleepers, I would have given the world for Smollett's pen to have perpetuated the scene.

The boatmen, who are always expert swimmers, and did not seem to lose their presence of mind by the sudden transition, very soon reached the shore, and gazed in astonishment, as well as myself, at the comedy in which they had taken such unexpected and conspicuous parts. I conceived some terrible offence must have been given to have called for such an uncompromising severity—for every one was driven from his berth. I was soon relieved from my suspense, however. The victor

strutted two or three times over the deserted field; then turning towards the routed enemy, who seemed ready to rally on the banks, shook his stick at them, and cried out in Hindostanee, "I'll teach you to snore, you scoundrels!" This ludicrous explanation of the whole mystery affected the crew, as it did myself, and a loud laugh was the reply. So extravagant a punishment for so natural a fault they thought it absurd to think further about; and with the greatest good-humour, not willing however to run the risk of a second flight, they kindled a fire, and squatting round it, smoked their pipes, and laughed at the event, till it was time to prepare for sailing.

It is not likely so touchy a traveller would give a favourable account of the people he travelled among—so he was always one of their most violent abusers. Poor man! the recollection of his fate almost rebukes me for having written the above anecdote. He was murdered a short time afterwards, on the banks of the river, in his progress to Cawnpore. He was alone, and his boat was moored to the shore,



on the side of the kingdom of Oude. A party of decoits (robbers) came down in the night, and made an easy entrance to the place where he was lying. His servants, with the exception of one man, had deserted him, and his boatmen were dispersed. The following day no traces could be found of his body, but the deranged state of his room showed what had happened. The remaining servant, too, heard a struggle, which was soon followed by a splash in the water. Some time afterwards, the vultures were seen feeding on the flesh of a white man, a little below the spot where the murder had occurred, and all was confirmed. The robbers, however, have never been discovered, nor is it likely that they ever will be.

Although the natives of the East are frequently enough prone to robbery, I do not think they are often guilty of murder. There is seldom occasion to conceal their deeds in the silence of the grave; for the immense extent of the country, with the skilful manner in which they are accomplished, render it nearly impossible to trace them. It is only in independent

states, however, where the police is not so vigilant as in our territory, nor so well organized, that such bold attacks as the one I have related above are ever made. They are said, upon that occasion, to have come down in great numbers, armed with swords and bludgeons; and one had a spear, for the servant who had not forsaken his master displayed a wound he had received from a thrust of the last-named weapon.

The bludgeon in general use is a formidable instrument, and is calculated to do as much execution as both the others put together, if wielded with moderate dexterity. It is a thick piece of bamboo, about four feet long, with iron rings at the intervals of four or six inches apart, and at the bottom it is loaded with a heavy piece of the same metal. I have heard that it was usual, when thieves broke into a room, for one of the party to stand with his uplifted cudgel behind the occupier of it, if he happened to be asleep, ready to let it fall upon his head should his evil genius move him to awake. If he slept on, when the plunder was completed, the "tender mercies" of the sentinel allowed him to continue

in repose. If ever such a mode of robbery did exist, the period when it flourished has fortunately passed away, curbed, with many other uncomfortable systems, by "old Father Antick, the law."

I shall here take occasion to relate another method that I have heard described, which the thieves adopt to prevent being seized upon when they are endeavouring to creep quietly through the apartment. They fasten a bare knife, with the edge uppermost, to the arm; and while crouching by the side of your bed, if you hear a noise, and put out your hand to seize the cause of it, they take good care that it shall grasp the blade of the weapon, from which, with great reason, they reckon you will not be long in withdrawing it.

I must endeavour to return to the peaceable scene I left, when I entered upon these tales of deadly peril. I offer no apology for the transition; for as change is the great charm of a journey, I hope a journalist may not be condemned for making it also an ingredient in his narrative. The scene around me is now considerably altered.

Dinner is over; and while the more precise and scrupulous are undergoing their ablutions in as picturesque parties as they formed during their meals, the others, having satisfied their own appetites, are busily engaged in preparing for the animals under their care; the camels are returning loaded with branches of the peepul for themselves; while the elephants, who have just received the call, are shuffling, with as much liveliness as they can express by their action, to a distant part of the ground, where their cakes of meal, well baked, are spread out for them. A certain number is allotted to each; a fourth of which is destined for the cooly, who assists the mahout, or driver, in the care of him, and whose duty it is to bake the cakes and administer them, which is by no means a hasty operation. Each cooly puts the food into the elephant's mouth with his own hands, and waits quietly by his side till he has swallowed one mouthful, ready to introduce the next. The portion intended for himself he first shows to the animal, and pretending to receive his assent to the appropriation, lays it aside; and such is the raga-

city of the elephant, that it is not too much to say he seems to understand the arrangement. One of the most striking features in the character of the East Indian is, the great devotion each person bestows upon his particular business. This arises, no doubt, from the division into castes, which having first introduced, now fosters the belief in the necessity of hereditary occupations. The Mahometans themselves, although privileged by their religion to be exempt from such restrictions, are not entirely free from the belief; and it is not uncommon to hear a low-born and uneducated person assert the privilege of his caste, when asked to do what he feels any repugnance from obeying. Each member, therefore, of that mighty race which sprang from Brahmah's foot--the race of mechanics--devotes all his energies to that particular branch that was followed and handed down to him, generally unimproved, by a long line of fathers.

Those men who attend to the care of animals are so identified with all their habits, that they seem to think of nothing else, and their charges appear so fully to understand them, that you may

fancy they take part, particularly the elephants, in the conversation of their keepers. Sometimes the mahout gains such an influence over this animal, that he may be suspected of having compelled the affections by "spells and medicines bought of mountebanks." Some fault had been found, not long ago, with the driver of a baggage elephant belonging to my regiment, and he was dismissed. The elephant had received his lesson, and would not suffer another to come near him. Several were procured one after the other, with excellent characters for kindness and management, but the gentlest creature seemed suddenly transformed into the most ungovernable. A month had passed without any return to rule, when the discharged driver was again taken into service, and the elephant, delighted to see him, became once more fit to use.

I have known the same tricks played with horses. They generally are unable to feel themselves, so dependant are they upon their grooms, when first bought from a native merchant, from their being accustomed to be crammed from the

hand. As the natives like to see a horse shaking with fat and his coat shining like glass, they stuff him three times a day with an extremely nasty looking mixture of meal and oil, and several sorts of spices, which they put into his mouth, having previously kneaded it into little balls. They assist the mastication with their fingers, and the poor animals undergo the operation with as little appearance of appetite as a well-gorged epicure, who thinks it necessary to gratify his palate, even when his stomach is gone. A string of horses at feeding-time presents rather a disagreeable than an interesting sight.

To return from another excursion, however, to the scene I set out from; the last ceremony being concluded, the washing of the cooking vessels, and the purification of the persons that had used them, the whole camp resounds with the bubbling of the hookah. Every class in India smokes tobacco; and the indulgence seems as necessary to them as the meals that precede it. The pipes are in as great variety too as the parties that are using them; from the painted cocoa nut with a small reed in it, to magnificent

balls of crystal or metal with their variegated snakes and gemmed mouth-pieces.

The Europeans are generally as much addicted to the custom as the natives; and not always considering the fitness of things, contrive that it should be introduced very frequently at the times it would be most gladly dispensed with. There is a degree of inconsistency, among which this may be ranked, in the fashions adopted in this country by the English.

It seems scarcely necessary, when fifty people sit down to dinner in the month of July, that the heat should be augmented by the addition of nearly two hundred servants. When the cloth is removed and this crowd no longer required, instead of benefiting by their dismissal, the hookahs are introduced, that the hot air may be duly set in motion by the fumes of tobacco. The habit becomes at length so confirmed that the person indulging in it cannot give it over; and if going out to dinner even to the distance of several miles, the pipe-bearer is seen creeping along the road "unwillingly to school," with all the heavy apparatus at his back. I do not think either the



noise or the odour in the least agreeable to one that has not been initiated by some years enjoyment of the luxury at least. I have heard of a gentleman, or old lady, I forget which, who, when travelling in a palanquin, had, at every stage where this personage changed bearers, a fresh chillum in readiness, in order to smoke the ennui of the journey away. I have frequently pitied the situation of a newly-arrived lady, placed at her first dinner between the fire of two hookahs, the smoke circling round her head and the gurgling noise rendering it impossible to hear a word. Sometimes those who do not happen to possess appetites themselves, throw their bodies back in their chairs and call for their pipes before many of the company have commenced their dinner. I know there is often a necessity for the practice, but where the members of society are celebrated for every grace and accomplishment that can adorn it, I wonder they have not been able to dismiss a custom, that certainly neither adds to its elegance nor its comfort.

## CHAPTER V.

*Oriental camp at night—Caravan of camels—Mysterious adventure in the desert—Continuation of the march, with an attempt to find a tiger—European and native travelling contrasted—An unfortunate collision—Arrival at Hurdwar.*

ON a moonlight night, (it is difficult to conceive the beauty of a full moon in this country,) the groups dispersed among the trees chatting and smoking, with the picturesque appearance of the tents, and the women drawing water from the tank which shines like a lake of silver, afford a delightful picture. The coolness of the night-air after the parching day that has just gone—for the hot winds have already begun—makes us all anxious to continue the enjoyment of it to the latest moment; and when at length it is time to seek for rest, a veil is not drawn over the scene; for, merely changing the arrangement of the figures, all seems as full of interest as ever. The

simple couch of the Eastern is soon prepared ; rolling himself up in his shawl, he stretches his limbs on the spot where he was sitting in company a few moments before, and instantly falls asleep.

It would be an easy matter to surprise a camp so situated ; and when no soldiers are of the party, it is necessary to have several chuokedars, or watchmen, from the adjoining village. They come to their posts at nightfall, and sitting on their haunches, shout out at intervals until daylight an " All's well," that conveys little notion of melody, and permits little indulgence in sleep. The propriety of setting a thief to catch a thief is often acknowledged in these distributions of sentinels, for many of them are most expert robbers, and when not bound by their honours to protect your property, would in all probability be engaged in transferring it to themselves. So irregularly and thickly are the sleepers scattered about the ground, that it is with some difficulty you can walk through the camp in the night without stumbling over them. In such a careless encampment it must have been that Medoro and his friend, in " Orlando

Furioso," slaughtered the sleeping Christians, when in pursuit of their master's body. However deficient in chivalrous appearance by day it may be, I always fancy some resemblance at night to the arrangement of the heroes and heroines of Tasso and Ariosto :

" ——— When sunk in heavy sleep,

" Our careless bands the watch no longer keep."

There is an air of fiction in every oriental scene, that it is some years before an European can quite shake off. I have not yet been able to do it. I cannot see

" The beasta with pain their dusty way pursue,"

and not remember how

" In silent horror o'er the boundless waste,  
The driver Hassan with his camels past."

The mere appearance of a string of camels conveys an idea of great heat ; and they not only seem to pursue their own way with pain, but communicate a similar feeling to all around them. The choking noise they make when being loaded, or when urged to rise with their burdens on their backs, is beyond all endurance when the number is great. Their sleepy appear-

ance when in motion, with the drowsy drivers nodding on their humps, is enough to try the temper of the most patient traveller. Those who are doomed to ride them without having been well trained to the exercise, I pity from my heart; this can never happen to an European in the East Indies, but I have a lively remembrance of a day's journey in the desert on a tired dromedary, when travelling from the shores of the Red Sea to the Nile. We started, three in number, with a guide, from the wells of Hajie Soleiman to those of Hammamat, at daylight in the morning. About ten o'clock my camel began to show symptoms of fatigue, or obstinacy, I do not know which, and having nearly dislocated my bones with the unsteadiness of its action, refused to continue any longer in company with my companions, who, jogging on, very soon left me out of sight.

I was for some hours perfectly alone, and felt, for the first time, how truly I was in the midst of a desert. The road, a defile among barren mountains, was very narrow and winding. Instead of the boundless sands that we imagine in a desert, it appeared to be the dried

bed of a river, that had once flowed between banks of dismal rocks, that were shining like jet in the sun, and reflecting its rays immediately upon us. Down the faces of the rocks there were frequently the marks of water-courses, which strengthened the belief that we were travelling where once some river might have held its course. My camel had a bell round its neck; accustomed to loiter, perhaps, it was necessary to use this precaution, for it was the only one of the party with such an appendage; its mournful sound and the occasional echo of the lash of my whip, when I endeavoured to urge it to a trot, were all that broke the awful silence of the scene. I was so tired that I could no longer sit upon its back, and having learnt the Arab mode of making it kneel down, I dismounted and attempted to lead it along. With unwilling steps and slow, it followed me for about an hour, when we reached a tree, the only one I had yet seen; it was as green as could be in such a situation, and looked nearly as forlorn and uncomfortable as myself. Here was a cross road, and I knew not which to take; my camel settled the point by refusing

to take either ; all the methods I could devise were unavailing, I had nothing left but to sit under "the sycamore tree," and sigh like Hassan :

"Sad was the hour, and luckless was the day,  
When first from Shiraz walls I bent my way."

I discovered a more ingenious plan, however, and unbuckling the bell from the camel's throat, rung it with all my might, bellowing at the same time as if I had been mad. I had not long been engaged in this sensible pursuit, when a cloud of dust seemed to rise in the most distant point of view, and immediately a number of Bedouins, mounted on the fleetest dromedaries, surrounded me ; they were armed with matchlocks, pistols, swords, and spears, and amounted to twenty. "The bell is answered, indeed," sighed I, "what is to be done now ?" I was in hopes they had witnessed my exertions in ringing, for believing fools and madmen to be under the special protection of Providence, they might have bowed down and worshipped me ; but, alas, they were too far off !

I was sufficiently well armed to make an imposing appearance, and with as much carelessness as I could assume, examined the priming of my pistols, and half drawing my sabre, seemed to look with great satisfaction on the shining blade, not doubting that my composure would have due effect upon my future masters.

They seemed, however, to trouble themselves but little about the matter, and obliging my camel to kneel down, gave me a hint that it was necessary to mount, by shaking a whip before me and pointing to the crouching beast. I was soon on his back again, and smiling and bowing, affected to be highly pleased with the addition I had received to my society. My stock of Arabic was so small, that I could not hope to be enlightened upon their intentions regarding me; so my own mind had it all its own way, and most woful pictures it contrived to draw. The head, or leader of the party, pointing towards me and then extending his arm in the direction we were to pursue, gave some hasty orders to about two-thirds of the party, who set off at a gallop, as I conjectured immediately, to take possession of



my fellow travellers. The chief and six men remained with myself, quite enough to prevent any great display of courage upon my part. I was placed between two men, who amused themselves by whipping my camel, and laughing heartily at the uncouth faces I could not conceal, from the torture his trotting threw me into; the others used all their endeavours to examine my arms, and continually shook the rifle that was slung at my back. I was determined not to part with one of my weapons, however, and, pretending to enjoy their curiosity, fastened them more readily about me.

I have no doubt I gave them good reason for the frequent bursts of laughter they indulged in, for my ludicrous efforts to appear comfortable, joined to the grimaces my situation extorted from me, must have impressed them with a high idea of my powers of pantomime.

As they had not attempted to plunder me, I began to hope they were generous thieves, who might present me to some great man, and that the worst of my occupations would be to draw water, or tend his favourite camels; to be a

naturalized Arab too, and train up a progeny of robbers, with many other extravagant visions, floated in my imagination, and I submitted, with tolerable resignation, to my fate.

Revived by the company it had fallen into, and the voices of the Arabs, with its near approach to water, my camel moved merrily on; and the sun was just setting, when we alighted opposite a small tent, pitched by the side of a neat square, in which lies the well of Hammamat. Four sentinels, with their matchlocks on their shoulders, were standing at the door; and my worst suspicions were confirmed, when I saw my two companions stretched on the ground within it. They were fast asleep; and unwilling to deprive them of the only agreeable moments they might have for a long time, I found a place for myself by their side, and soon fell into a sound slumber also, so great was my fatigue, undisturbed by dreams of water skins, camels, the routing of caravans, or even of Arab maids, with their eyes like antelopes, and their forms graceful as the dromedary. It was midnight before I awoke, when I found all my delightful adventures, "like the baseless

fabric of a vision," had "melted into air." The party that had overtaken me had been sent by the Bey of Khenah as an escort for us across the desert, in consequence of some robbery that had been lately committed by a party of Bedouins. They had missed us, and passing by another tract, had got into our rear: they were Bedouins also, and had taken each of us in detail, in the manner I have described; for my companions had divided, and were led, like myself, into a seeming captivity. We had the advantage, therefore, of experiencing a marvellous adventure, without any of the ills that should attend it.

An encampment in the desert—for rising at midnight, when the moon was shining clearly, brought it more especially under my notice—is not less beautiful than a similar scene in the more fertile country of the East, I am now in. It had not the shadow of the wide trees to shelter the sleepers, nor the addition of the elephants and horses; but its appearance of loneliness and intense silence, at that hour, was so appalling, that it was not easy to witness the scene, and forget it. The familiarity between the Arab and

his camel is much greater than that I have noticed in India; for he applies it to a use that has not yet occurred, I think, to the driver of Hindostan. For sleeping, in a cold night, the Arab places two camels abreast; and throwing his blanket over them, as an awning, he lies between their bodies, receiving their warmth, without the slightest risk of being overlain in the course of his rest.

April 5th. We set off at daylight, and rode to breakfast at a spot near the village of Lundour. It is the custom for travellers to take good care to have all provided for their comfort. A portion of the camp equipage, and a number of the servants, were sent forward the evening before, to arrange the ground, and prepare the food; and it was not long before every thing was made as comfortable, in our moveable hotel, as it would be in the best inn in the world. We had not long arrived, and were seated under the few trees that were scattered about our neighbourhood, when we were thrown into bustle by the arrival of a husbandman and his son in the camp. They came to inform us that a tiger

had slain a bullock, while grazing in the herd they were tending, the evening before: and as he had not yet devoured him, he was likely to be near us. We were not long in preparing for the chase: and, mounting our elephants about mid-day, set out in pursuit, accompanied by the man, who assured us he could lead us to the very spot. We mustered four elephants with howdahs; and a fifth, with a pad upon its back, was destined to bring home the game, and to carry the footmen of the party, when we became engaged with the enemy.

We took an easterly direction from our position, and in about two hours entered a somewhat swampy ground, well covered with grass and reeds, that were so long as to conceal the bodies of the elephants. Many clumps of trees were scattered over the plain we were beating, like islets in a wide lake; and to one of these, in the centre of which was a dismal swamp, our guide led us, and marching boldly into it, exclaimed, "There is the bullock!" and made a discreet retreat to the pad elephant in the rear. We placed ourselves in a line, and stood up man-

fully, each in his own castle, his double-barrelled gun in hand, ready for the foe : not a word was spoken—all was breathless expectation. We did not leave a corner of the little forest unsearched, for it seemed the most likely spot to be selected for the solitary lair of the tiger ; and just as we were quitting it in despair, we perceived the bones of the bullock, spoken of by the countryman in the first instance ; though from the opposite direction that they were in, to that which we had entered by, he could never have seen them. They were so well picked, it was evident the tiger had long abandoned them to the jackals, or vultures, which are generally in attendance to complete his work.

After beating every other likely place for some hours, we returned to our couch at night-fall tolerably tired and disappointed. In the early part of the day we disturbed many black partridges and hog deer, but, resolved on the destruction of the nobler game, we reserved our fire, and lost the opportunity of trying our skill upon the lesser. We observed several herds of cattle grazing in various directions, and attended, although there

were sometimes two hundred head in each, by only two or three men at the utmost. Scarcely a night passes without the loss of one or more animals, and the herdsmen have no other means of scaring the tiger than by the voice, which I suspect has no great effect. The tiger steals quietly upon his prey, and knocking it down with his paw, carries it off before the loss is perceived, except from the sensation it causes among the remainder of the cattle, which fly terrified in all directions. Fortunately for these poor men, the flesh of the cow has more attractions for the tiger's palate than human flesh, and instances of their being destroyed are consequently rare.

April 6th.—We were again on horseback at daylight, and very soon found we were not the only active travellers on the road: we overtook crowds of people hastening to the fair at Hurdwar. We had already exceeded the best time by two or three days, and were as anxious as the numerous strings of pilgrims to the sacred river could be, to reach the object of their wishes. It is not usual to find so much interest upon the high-road, for, notwithstanding the great popu-

lation of the country, travelling is not general among any class of the natives. The grotesque equipages we met with this day have given ample cause for amusement; and the various tribes of people who are journeying with us, give much room for speculation and conjecture: there seem to be collections of all the countries of the East.

We have not failed to add our share of entertainment to the scene, and have given, I fear, to some classes more trouble and annoyance than we felt the least disposed to do. There is a striking contrast between the patient mode of proceeding among the natives, and "the pace" at which the Europeans proceed in their journeys. We were cantering along at our usual rate, when we overtook a drove of bullocks laden with goods for the fair. Many of them were quite wild, and apparently just taken from the pasture to carry the burthens that were swung upon their backs, in bags balanced by their equal weight, for they seldom use any girths. Our approach was too sudden for them, and they set off galloping in every possible direction; the order of march was soon irretrievably disturbed; bales of goods



and bags of grain strewed the road; and the unfortunate merchants and their servants set off screaming in pursuit of the runaway cattle, which led them a weary dance; for, delighted at their liberation from thralldom, they never stopped to look behind them, but betook themselves to the course of the wood on each side of the road by which we were passing.

Several herds were grazing around: and, as if to congratulate their fellows on their escape, hastened to the scene, with their tails in the air, and in compact columns rushed by us, nearly smothering us with the dust they raised; then wheeling suddenly round, halted at the head of a line of hackeries (bullock carriages) and seemed determined to resist the passage; the animals in the hackeries were disposed to join in the frisk, and it required all the groaning and twisting of their tails the drivers were capable of, to prevent them. They dragged their vehicles off the road, however, some lodging in a ditch, and others, in endeavouring to climb up a bank, discharging their loads rather prematurely at the foot of it. There were one or two little carriages drawn by

ponies, that went quietly over the ruin, neither they, nor the parties who drove them, seeming to care about the matter. Two formidable looking machines, in the shape of bee-hives, covered with scarlet cloth, having curtains in front of them, and each drawn by a pair of very fine bullocks, had been moving with all the solemnity possible in the front of the procession, when an offensive movement on the part of the cattle, having something the resemblance of a charge, involved them in the general uproar, and the leading one upsetting, completed the confusion.

The screaming of females from within, who seemed to be crowded like bees in their hives, did not tend to diminish the confusion that ensued. Their voices, on the contrary, "like fiddles in a concert, ever the loudest, if not the shrillest instruments," rather contributing to swell the tumult. It was difficult to discover whether they were most alarmed or angry, from the effect it had upon the men; however, I think the latter feeling predominated, for they abandoned all attempts to remedy the evils that had crowded upon them, and turning upon

the women with the most violent gestures, endeavoured to out-tongue them. The language of the East, at all times figurative and extravagant, exceeds any thing that can be imagined in the metaphor of its abuse, and the torrent of words that an enraged woman can pour upon the ear of her opponent is frightful indeed!

The skirmish that had been confined in the first instance to the few who had suffered from the overthrow, now became general; the following hackeries could not proceed until the one that interrupted their progress was righted. It was necessary, therefore, that the drivers in the rear should rush forward to abuse the men whose duty it was to make them a passage, and they lost not one moment of their opportunity. The plot continued thickening every minute, for the roads are so narrow throughout the country, that it is not an easy matter for one cart to pass another; and as there is seldom any emulation in either bullock or driver, it is not necessary, perhaps, that they should be able to do so. As if the rainy season had totally destroyed all

appearance of a road, it seems to be the plan for the first cart that passes after it, to fix the track for all the others, and most scrupulously do they adhere to the ruts that have been thus laid down as a guide. The noise rose to such a pitch, that we, who were, I hope, the innocent causes of all, found our endeavours utterly un-availing to restore order. We cantered out of it, and were long before we had entirely escaped from the sound.

I shall never forget the shrill accent of one old woman who seemed to be the matron of the rest, and assumed the right, as she most certainly had the power, of out-Heroding all. She thrust her lank figure, hastily covered with a yellow scarf, through the opening of the carriage she was driving in, and waving her long shrivelled arm, harangued at the top of her voice for more than five minutes without drawing breath. We pitied the partner of so much softness, who stood at the head of his bullocks with an indifference that nothing but long practice could have given him, and hastily

escaped from the whirlwind of her tongue. Had I met her on a blasted heath, I should have doubted whether she were "aught that man may question," so withered and so wild was her attire.

Before the sun became very hot, we reached the village of Juallapore, which seemed to be quite deserted—all its inhabitants being absent at the fair. It was not, however, noiseless, for we were followed through its streets by crowds of dogs, that courteously saw us to the outside of the town. The road now became sandy, and not unpleasant to ride over. We were well sheltered by the branches of the trees, and entertained by the various tribes of travellers winding through the wood, who increased considerably in numbers and picturesque appearance. At the town of Kunkul, where we soon arrived, there was a still greater collection. It seemed to be an outpost to the armies of pilgrims and merchants that were by this time collected at Hurdwar: horses, camels, and elephants, with an innumerable variety of

human beings, were assembled here to take their last rest before they made their entry to the fair.

Kunkul is a very considerable village, and the country around it extremely beautiful. We were agreeably surprised, and the more so from the transition being sudden, at the change the scenery in its neighbourhood presented from the dreary sameness of that of the preceding days.

The streets are wide, and the houses remarkably good, built of brick, and whitened with cement. A number of singular figures are painted upon the walls and the fronts of the houses—animals of every description, and men and women that have, I hope, no resemblances upon earth! and in positions in utter defiance of the rules of either nature or art. These paintings, “*al fresco*,” are in colour closer imitations of reality. The human beings are of all shades, and the tigers and leopards are striped and spotted with admirable precision. A group of European gentlemen, smoking, with their ladies by their sides, and surrounded by servants,

occupied nearly the whole front of one of the largest houses—and a most whimsical picture they presented. Black people, it has been observed, feel a greater degree of surprise, not unmingled with horror, at first beholding a white person, than we do at meeting one of their complexion. Those, who first descending to the plains through Hurdwar, to mix among the singular looking beings pictured at Kunkul, if this be true, will have good cause to be disgusted at the first representations they meet with of them. We need not be mortified, however, at our caricatures, while their own are fully as ludicrous. I was not able to discover to whose brush this village was indebted for its uncommon decorations.

In the groves of trees around were many monkeys, that appeared to occupy the houses in common with their human inhabitants, whenever they felt disposed to change the scene: they were to be seen by dozens playing on the flat roofs, or perched with much gravity at the open verandahs, to observe the passing crowds. Continuing through a thickening forest, we rode

into Hurdwar by a narrow path across a gentle hill that rose from the bank of the river. Among the trees were two temples, not very far apart. When the strings of travellers arrived opposite them, each person exclaimed with a loud voice, "Mahadeo Bol!" and "bol, bol," continued to resound for some time along the sacred shores. Emerging from this sheltered spot, we were in a moment in the midst of bustle—in the centre of the fair of Hurdwar!



## CHAPTER VI.

The fair of Hurdwar—Digression in pursuit of Tigers, with many other digressions—Ill-effects of not keeping to the letter—Return to Meerut.

It is not an easy matter to describe the singular scene that is exhibited at the fair of Hurdwar, where the Hindoos assemble in countless multitudes, to combine, as they every where contrive so admirably to do, their spiritual and temporal pursuits. For several miles before we reached it, we had passed thousands of people in every description of vehicle hastening towards it. They were of all ages, all costumes, and all complexions: no spot upon earth can produce so great a variety of the human race at one assemblage, and it would be

impossible to enumerate the articles of different sorts, or even the countries that produce them, offered for sale in the streets. The merchants in their own languages praise their own commodities, and make a confusion of tongues highly bewildering to a learned pundit, but to a European, "confusion worse confounded."

There are horses from all parts of the globe, elephants, camels, and buffalos, cows, and sheep of every denomination, thickly crowded together; dogs, cats, and monkeys, leopards, bears, and cheators; sometimes the cubs of a tigress, and always from the elk to the mouse deer, every species of that animal. Shawls from Cashmere, and woollen cloths from England, are displayed on the same stall; coral from the Red Sea, agate from the Guzzerat, precious stones from Ceylon, gums and spices from Arabia, asafoetida and rose-water from Persia, brought by the natives of each country to the mart, lie by the side of watches from France, pickles from China, sauces from England, and perfume from Bond-street and the Rue St. Honoré. I have seen a case of French rouge, and henna for the fingers

of an eastern fair, selling in adjoining booths; antimony to give languor to an oriental eye, and all the embellishments of a European toilet!

In roaming through the fair you are amused by the tricks of the eastern jockeys: here one is ambling on a richly caparisoned horse, with necklaces of beads and bangles of silver, displaying his paces with the utmost dexterity; another is galloping as hard as he can, to show how admirably he can bring him on his haunches; while a third lets his horse loose, and calls him by a whistle, to prove his docility. Elephants and camels are exhibiting at the same time their several graces and accomplishments, while a Persian, with a brood of the beautiful cats of his country, stands quietly by to attract you with his quadrupeds, if you should fail in making a bargain for the larger ones.

The dealers invariably ask ten times as much as they mean to take, and vary their demands as they gather from your countenance your anxiety or indifference for the purchase. It is not uncommon for a horse-dealer to fall, in the course of a few moments, in his demand, from

ten to one thousand rupees. When the bargain is about to be concluded, the buyer and the seller throw a cloth over their hands, and naming a price, ascertain by the pressure of certain joints how nearly they are making towards its termination. By this means, in the midst of a crowd they deal in secret; and it is laughable to see, through an affected air of carelessness, how deeply they are interested.

During their great attention to worldly matters, they are not forgetful of the grand object of the Hurdwar meeting: crowds succeeding crowds, move all day towards the Ghaut, and no minute of the twenty-four hours passes without being marked by the cleanly rites of the worship of Gunga: the devout bathers of all sexes, assemble in thousands, and perform their ablutions with so perfect a sincerity and indifference to appearance, that they seem nearly ignorant whether they are clad or not.

The Ghaut presents as singular and motley a sight as the fair itself: Europeans lounging on the backs of elephants to witness the bathing—Brahmins busy in collecting the tribute—reli-

gious mendicants displaying every species of indecency and distortion—and Christian ministers anxiously and industriously distributing to the pilgrims copies of the Scriptures, translated into their various languages. Some of these excellent men—for no difficulty or labour stays them in their heavenward course—sit in the porches of the temples, with baskets of tracts by their sides, giving them to all who approach; the number so disseminated must be very great, for every person is attracted to the seat of the missionary as he passes from the river to complete his devotion at the temple.

We hear very little of Hindoo conversion, and many who have not had the opportunity of witnessing the zeal and perseverance of our missionaries may imagine that they slumber on their posts. But theirs is a silent way, and their endeavours, though little seen or heard, have, under the Divine assistance, produced some effect. It would be enlarging on a well-known tale to dwell upon the sorrows that a Hindoo must bear, and the struggles he must make, before he can renounce his religion. The

severest sacrifices, however, have been made, and as it has been often gravely asserted, that such examples of sincerity have never occurred, I cannot resist relating the following instance, which fell under my own observation.

A soldier belonging to one of the native regiments had been baptized by the chaplain of the station where it was quartered. He was a great favourite with his comrades, and such a circumstance made no inconsiderable stir among them. The government, on hearing of the matter, ordered an investigation into it; the soldier's story was simple, and his subsequent conduct proved it to be true.

"From the first year I entered the service," he said, "I was struck with the difference of the conduct of the British officers and the higher men of my own country—the former I noticed never told an untruth, and were never guilty of a dishonest action—among the latter, truth was little considered, and knavish tricks were far too common. On the expedition to Java, while on shipboard, I had an opportunity of observing the manners of the English more minutely, and was

confirmed in my ideas regarding them. I was struck with their mode of praying every Sunday, and became anxious to be better informed in their religious beliefs. I conversed whenever I could with Europeans on the subject, and never ceased to think of all they told me, till on my return to Calcutta, I obtained a translated copy of the Bible. I studied it constantly, and determined to become a Christian. I knew it was necessary, before I could make this declaration, to take leave of every member of my family, and I got a furlough for that purpose. I had much to struggle with. I put off the disclosure to the last moment, and when at length I made it, all the opposition I anticipated was offered. When I combated their arguments, they assailed me with reproaches and tears. I remained firm, however, and parted with them as if I had been going to execution. I can never hope to meet them again. Judge if I am not sincere. And now, gentlemen," continued he, addressing the military court of inquiry, "are you not Christians and soldiers too! how then can my becoming a Christian unfit me for a

soldier? or why, because I believe in your God, am I not capable of serving your king?" It was considered proper to remove this man from his regiment. A pension, the amount of his pay, was settled upon him, and he now is free to attend the Christian worship, and a man of more exemplary manner, or more respectable appearance, cannot be found in any church in Europe.\*

The lower classes of Hindoos have, I am grieved to say, little encouragement to believe, from the example of their equals among our own countrymen. The self-indulgence that the heat of the climate in some degree may excuse, sinks, among the lower order of Europeans, into the coarsest immorality. Although the discipline of the troops is as high as possible, there are few services more irksome to the feelings of a British officer, and none less appreciated, than a tour of duty in the East Indies. It is not a light oc-

\* I hope the Rev. H. F., the gentleman from whom I heard this story, should these pages ever fall under his notice, will excuse my having taken the liberty of making the above use of it: it interested me so much that I could not easily forget it.



cupation to hold constantly the bridle on licentiousness and crime.

The many classes of Hindoos who attend at Hurdwar present the most interesting sight to a European that can be imagined. It is a school of manners and customs. I was astonished at the striking difference in complexion and features of the inhabitants of the same country: the tall, fair figures of the Sikhs, with the slight and coal-black forms of the Bengalees, offered not a greater contrast than the short and sturdy Ghorhas, with their yellow Tartar-like faces, exhibited between both of these. The men of Cabul and of Thibet are again totally different; and though last not least, the Europeans, whose tents and equipages contrast as widely with the strange display around them, as they themselves differ in person and dress. The noises suit well with the grotesque scene. From the sacred shell of the Brahmin to the roaring of wild beasts, there is every variety of vocal and instrumental music.

I had pitched my tent in the midst of the market-place, on a little hill, commanding a view of

the whole scene. I had soon reason to quarrel with my position. On one side of me was the *asafetida* bazaar—on the other the booths of the confectioners. The odour arising from the first, and the flies attracted by the last, were more than human patience could endure. To complete my disaster, I found that I was encamped over a cluster of ants' nests—an event that very frequently occurs—so, when driven in to shelter myself from the flies, I ran the risk of being nearly being devoured by the ants. I soon determined to change my position, and chose a clear spot of grass, on the edge of a thick wood, a little without the village.

Though I gained in comfort by daylight, I found so sequestered a spot was not calculated for a dark night. The thieves of the East are the most expert in the world; and as I was travelling from curiosity, they were complaisant enough to show me some of their sleight of hand. My tent was a very small one, calculated only for my mountain journey; and there was little more room in it than served to admit my bed and table: they contrived, nevertheless,

while I was asleep within it, to carry every thing I possessed away ; and when I rose at daylight to commence my journey, I had the prospect of making worse than a bare-footed pilgrimage. My canvass walls had been cut through in two places ; by one aperture, no doubt, they entered, and escaped by the other. Fortunately for me, they had been disturbed, and many of my clothes hung on the branches of the neighbouring trees. I felt mortified at being robbed so easily, while in the tent myself ; but was much consoled, in the morning, by learning that the knapsacks of a picquet had been also stolen from the tent, in which the men composing it were asleep.

I have heard so many instances of the skill of these worthies, that I should never feel astonished at any feats they might perform. A traveller accustomed to be robbed in Europe would scarcely think it possible that a sheet should be stolen from under him without his discovering it ; but nothing is more simple to a Hindoo thief ;—perfectly naked, he glides, like a serpent, into the room, and sits on the floor, at the foot of the bed, watching his opportunity :

when he thinks the sleeper fast as possible, he gives the sheet a gentle pull, and crouches under the bed. If disturbed from his nap, seeing nothing, the man yawns, stretches, turns round, and sleeps again. This is natural, and on this the thief reckons. By repeating the same operation two or three times, the utmost that will be necessary, he gains the sheet, and makes off.

To leave the people for the scenery: nothing can exceed the change between the country of Hurdwar and that only five miles below it. You break from a desert to green fields—from a dreary ocean to a fairy land. Travelling on the plains of India, in the month of April, when the breezes every day announce the approach, by growing hotter and hotter, of the burning winds of May, is little more than one degree better than the desert. The land has not quite lost its greenness, however; but a vapour (at mid-day) hangs over it, so like a mirage, that notwithstanding its cultivation, while your camels toil patiently along, you may almost deem yourself on the road to Mecca. How delightful, therefore, is it to hail the wooded hills of the Hurd-

war Pass, and the broad and rapid flow of the Ganges as it breaks from the control of mountains, to pass more than twelve hundred miles to the sea ! It is the circumstance of Hurdwar being the first pass by which the sacred river enters the plains, that has made it so holy a spot ; and using it for so cleanly a ceremony of devotion as bathing, is a matter of high importance to many, who seemed to have nourished their impurities at least a year, to give Gunga the sole merit of cleansing them—too jealous of the honour of their god to suffer any other water to rival him.

April 10th.—As we did not feel discouraged by the disappointment of our first attempt at tiger-shooting, we resolved, instead of entering the Valley of the Dhoon, to go in pursuit of such sport once more, and beat through the jungle at the foot of the range of hills that divide that beautiful valley from the plains. We set out about two o'clock, intending to pass the night in a tope of trees which we had observed in passing near the village of Juallapore. The fair was drawing to its close, as well as the period that is considered most holy and efficacious for the

bathers, which is determined by the motion of the heavenly bodies.

The road was still more crowded than when we entered it, for all classes were proceeding homeward, many in high spirits at the result of their speculations, and many sufficiently sad, at having to drive their cattle, or drag their bales, half through Hindostan before they could stand any chance of getting rid of them. I observed many horses that had been "cried at four thousand pieces of gold" on the commencement of the fair, that their owners would have been well pleased to part with now for a few hundred pieces of silver. They are often obliged to lead them as low down as Allahabad, or Benares, before they can meet with purchasers for them. There is scarcely a Serai in any town of the Doab that has not at one period of the day, during the spring of the year and the cold season, a string of horses resting in it, with all the jockies of the neighbourhood *smoking* in council upon their respective qualities.

The visitors, whose devotion alone has led them to Hurdwar, may easily be known by the

family groups they form, and their happy faces, in which it is easy to fancy you may read the conviction of the good deed they have just performed. It is impossible to look at them, knowing the great distances they have come for the purpose, and the weary way they have yet before them to their homes, without interest. Alas ! that so much zeal and so great self-denial should be bestowed upon such a cause !

In noticing the distribution of the Scriptures by a missionary, who had posted himself near the Ghaut, I forgot to mention the avidity with which many, particularly of the Sikhs, crowded around him to obtain copies. I stood for some time near the spot where he was sitting, without, I believe, being perceived by him, and was astonished at the attention they all paid to the few words he was able to address to them. A middle-aged man, with several of his family about him, came up to me with his book, and repeated the words the "Padre Sahib" had spoken to him on presenting it, and, as if really anxious to have them corroborated, asked with much earnestness if it were true—"Sach bat?" I

assured him it all was. "Then," said he, "I will read the book to my family whenever I get home."

It was indeed a sad change to turn from this pleasing picture to the naked and disgusting devotees who glided like troubled spirits, among the crowd, their persons smeared with chalk or cow-dung, and their heads personifying completely the imagined freak of Queen Mab,

"Who takes the elf-locks in foul sluttish hairs,  
Which, once untangled, much misfortune bodes."

We found it so difficult to get every body away from the fair, that it was sunset before we reached Juallapore; and having with proper foresight sent our cooks and dinners forward, although the tents had not arrived, the "kitchen range" was soon established, and all appeared to be going merrily on. Under the shelter of a high hedge were arranged spits with peacocks and partridges, while soup, rice, and currie were boiling as fast as they could around; and, though last not least, the oven, which had been formed in a bank of clay close by, was "heating" as well



as could be expected, when suddenly the hues of sun-set were obscured, and a dark cloud rose in the north-west; a low murmur ushered the approach of something destructive to our plans, and in a moment after the typhoon (hurricane) was upon us.

The tents had arrived a few minutes before, and were in the act of being pitched; they were scattered, however, in every direction. Dust rolled in billows about us, and all was in the direst confusion! Our spits and cooking-pots were soon thrown prostrate, and the flying fragments of burnt wood denoted a farewell to the possibility of retrieving affairs for some time. Every one being interested in their restoration, flew to the rescue, and it was quite laughable to see the schemes adopted to remedy the disaster. The servants contented themselves with shouting and scolding to the utmost of their strength, while their masters, more concerned in the matter, scrambled after the dispersed feast. It was now quite dark, but it would appear too like a purposely-contrived confusion, if I were to continue the description of it. I do not think, how-

ever, it would be possible to caricature it. In such scenes it is not likely all people can keep their tempers; I must not omit to celebrate, therefore, the rage of one of our party, who heightened the uproar by pursuing his servants, with a horsewhip in his hand, to punish them for some imaginary fault. They flew with the utmost speed through the darkness, while their pursuer roared to them in most unintelligible Hindostanee to stop, and vented his rage upon every object, animate or inanimate, that came in his way. "Pagul hoguya,"—he has gone mad, was the general cry throughout the ground, while each terrified native flew from his approach. He still continued

"To run a-muck, and tilt at all he met,"

without any diminution of his anger, till, fairly exhausted, he was obliged to sit down and gasp for breath. We were able to read him a practical lesson on the disadvantages of giving way to passion, for when he returned to his tent, disappointed and fatigued from the chase, we had

made ourselves comfortable, while the scattered portions of his equipage were still to seek, and no one to assist him in the pursuit. It was past two in the morning before he succeeded in getting his tent properly pitched.

The dialogues that take place between an angry master, who has little knowledge of the language, and his servants, is, although extremely entertaining to an uninterested listener, sufficiently alarming to the weaker party, the natives. They show a great deal of ingenuity in discovering the meaning, sharpened, perhaps, by their fears; and although they are often accused of stupidity, I must declare that no European peasant I ever met with could understand directions delivered under similar disadvantages, in the manner they do. I was acquainted with a person on my first arrival in India, who boasted of knowing ten or twelve words in Hindostanee, with which he found, to use his own phrase, "he could get on famously." Quite proud of the extent of his knowledge, he was always exercising it, and in the most pompous manner delivered his orders, never feeling the

least misgiving about being understood. It is no slight merit, surely, in the men to be able to compress their verbose language to so limited a vocabulary as my friend's. I have often been reminded, in witnessing such scenes, of the dialogue between Ancient Pistol and his French prisoner, in Henry the Fifth.

*French Soldier.* Est il impossible d'échapper la force de ton bras ?

*Pistol.* Brass, cur !

Thou damned and luxurious mountain goat,  
Offer'st me brass !

The abuse, and indeed the blow, that immediately follow any doubtful interpretation, would "sort well with the fierceness" of that distinguished hero.

I am sorry to say, the observations I have made apply generally to the military masters: the civilians have the advantage of a greater knowledge of the language, and the means of better regulating their *ménage*. Few persons, I hope, after a residence of some years, are

guilty of such conduct, and much perhaps may be said in excuse of the "new comers," who find themselves suddenly transported, at sixteen years of age, from the discipline of school to be lords over half-a-dozen obsequious lacqueys. And I am not certain, however detestable the custom, but the masters are the greatest sufferers in the end, for as no respectable servants can be found to engage with them, they are tolerably fleeced for their tyranny. It is a vice that carries its own punishment with it.

Whatever beauties and luxuries the East may possess, there is a proportionate difficulty in overcoming the dragons that guard them. If it were not for the happy mixture of the ludicrous in every distress that occurs to the novice, an arrival at Calcutta would make matter for a pathetic picture. How long I shall remember my passage up the Hoogly from Saugor, in the middle of June! seven of us, bag and baggage, in a small boat, (a Rauleah,) with a cabin of about twelve feet by four. Two nights were we engaged in active war with

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mosquitoes, and two days did we sit, "men of perpetual dissolution and thaw," gradually melting away.

How often have I pitied the poor youths, who, just landed from shipboard, wander about Fort William buttoned up to the throat in blue cloth coats, while the sun is vertical, their faces swelled with mosquito bites, and their persons in a high fever! And then the rooms they are put into! three or four of them in one, perhaps, without light, and almost without air! There are few places in this world so thoroughly uncomfortable as Fort William, even to the higher ranks, but to the subalterns it is beyond all conception terrible.

April 11th.—We halted this day in the midst of the forest at the base of the hills, and near a little village so perfectly retired, that it was almost necessary to seek for it among the trees. I forget its name, but it was about twelve coss from Hurdwar: on our route to it we had not met with much to interest us; a few partridges, black and grey, with a great abundance of quail,

and now and then a hog deer, afforded a little diversion during the march. The grass was so long that we found it necessary to enter our howdahs in order to enjoy the sport. It is sufficiently laughable to take the field against quail with a string of elephants, and the gravity of the animals is brought with a ludicrous force to the mind when engaged in such a pursuit. It is necessary, however, in following small birds, to be protected from the probable attacks of greater game. A tiger would materially interfere with the amusement. The elephants are well accustomed to the sport, and almost seem to stand at a bird.

We gathered from the village in the afternoon all the men and boys we could find to beat the ground for us, and made no inconsiderable army. The quails are so numerous in this neighbourhood, that it is impossible to load rapidly enough to be ready for them, even when carrying relays of guns. I met a sporting gentleman, who not long ago laid a wager that he would shoot seventy brace within the Dhoon,

and ride a hundred miles, between daylight and dinner at six o'clock in the evening, and he won his bet easily.

It is astonishing how little consideration the different classes of natives possess for each other. It seemed to give the Mahouts pleasure to drive their elephants through the standing corn, and when they twisted nearly whole sheaves out of the ground in their trunks they never attempted to prevent them. The Europeans do not often set them a good example. Sometimes the Zomeendars apply for remuneration for mischief done, but generally their apathy overcomes their sufferings. We endeavoured, however, to avoid doing injury as much as possible.

On returning to our tents in the evening we found a professional huntsman awaiting us. He had heard of our being in the jungle, and had come to act as guide and gamekeeper. He was a smart young man, about thirty years of age, and carried a matchlock, and a triangular rest to fire it from, the limbs of which closing together, served as a pole to walk with. His was a dangerous office, to make him-



self acquainted with the haunts and habits of wild beasts. He and his brother were well known to the sportsmen who visit these forests as being great adepts in their business. He offered to lead us to the very spot where a tiger was; "For," said he, "I saw him this morning as I was coming here." In his relation and description of the country round, he showed so perfect an intimacy with the pursuits of the wild beast, that we were quite astonished. He told us that his brother had been killed by a tiger during the last hot weather; "but," continued he, "that is nothing, for so has his father, and so I suppose shall I be." Indeed he seemed to take some pride in the prospect, and I fear, poor fellow, he is not very likely to disgrace his ancestors by dying a less glorious death.

It is proper to have a person with you well acquainted with the woods, if only to avoid falling into the traps dug for the wild elephants. The pits are so ingeniously covered that it is not easy for strangers to detect them; and in the heat of the chase to be suddenly dropped into the shades would be too tantalizing an adventure

to run any risk of. I have heard an anecdote related of the sagacity of an elephant to which such an accident happened, so extraordinary that I feel some hesitation in repeating it. The pit into which he fell was very deep, and it was found impossible to draw him out. His driver obtained two or three large bundles of faggots, and throwing them in to him, succeeded in teaching him to place them at the bottom, which he at length learned. It was only necessary, therefore, to add to the number until he had raised himself near enough to the surface to scramble out, which he soon accomplished.

There are a great many elephants in the woods, in this part of India, but they are not so much esteemed as those which come from a warmer latitude; we have not met with any, although sometimes they are to be seen frequently enough, and have been known to come down and attack the tame ones.

When they are met in herds they are not prone to mischief, but a solitary one, driven perhaps for some breach of law from its associates, is generally ready to offend. It is some-

what appalling, when not quite prepared for the onset, to hear the crackling of the wood, as a wild herd rushes through it. In travelling through Assam, I have heard that this is frequently experienced. And in the interior of Ceylon, I have listened myself with astonishment to the tremendous sound. The elephants sometimes display a great deal of humour in their attacks. After having routed the party, who generally leave their goods behind, they amuse themselves by a most minute examination of them, and take real pleasure in their destruction.

I remember a narrow pass in the kingdom of Kandy being a long time guarded by one elephant, who determined to allow no one to go through it, without paying him tribute. On his first appearing at the mouth of it he had frightened a cooly laden with jagztay, a preparation of sugar; the fellow, throwing his burthen down, ran away. The elephant picked it up, and finding it excellent, resolved upon levying a similar tax upon all future travellers. As the pass was on the highway to Kandy, he could not have chosen a better position for his purpose;

and "no trust," although not written upon his gate, was distinctly enough notified to all passengers. The circumstance soon became generally known, and no cooly ventured to pass that way without having prepared a sop for the Cerberus who guarded it.

Nothing can exceed the caution with which the elephants move in doubtful ground. "Take heed, my child,—gently, my son," uttered in a warning tone by the Mahouts, they perfectly understand, and never make a false step, nor lead you unawares into a scrape. It is not an easy matter either to force them into any situation contrary to their own judgments. The most extraordinary gift of Providence to this animal is its perfect knowledge of its own weight, which infers a power of reasoning little less than that of the human race. How just, too, are the distributions of the God of nature, for without that faculty the elephant would move in continual danger!

May 12th. We sent our camels this morning at daylight to a space sufficiently large to contain our encampment, which had been described

to us as situated within a wood, in the neighbourhood of a small tomb, about five coss from the position we then occupied.

At seven o'clock we mounted our elephants, resolved upon taking a wider range, and shooting over the jungle we were to pass through. In an hour we completely lost sight of cultivation, and had entered the thick Saul forest that bounds the plain of Hindostan without the hills. Within the woods we found a great number of beautiful peacocks, and killed several of them. They were in fine feather, and gave a most animated appearance to the otherwise gloomy scene. We frequently met them collected, in large flocks, in the clear spaces within the forest, or immediately on the skirts of it. They are very wild, and averse to rise on the wing; and run so fast, that it is by no means an easy matter to come within shot of them.

We traversed four or five miles of the wood, finding much difficulty sometimes, from our great height, to pass under the branches of the trees; and at length issued upon a narrow gullet, having rising ground upon each side of it, thickly

wooded, with a small stream running through it. Here the hog deer were very numerous; and though not easy to see them from the length of the grass, we knew them immediately from the suddenness with which they rise, and the unsteadiness of their running. They keep their heads down, and shuffle along with great speed, affording a strong contrast to the grace and agility of the antelope, which we also met with. We had frequently killed some of the former, and found their flesh of a very agreeable flavour; that of the latter is rather coarse.

The only appearance of any thing approaching to a tiger, was in a distant view of some large animal of a similar colour, to which a portion of the party gave chase. It was most likely a hyæna, or leopard, both of which are to be found in plenty. They did not discover it, however. While they were in pursuit, another person and myself became entangled in the wood, for the guide had accompanied the chase, and were soon in as hopeless a state as the babes; for the day had passed away before we could extricate ourselves, and “when we saw the darksome

night," we still "went wandering up and down," with very little prospect of getting out of it. We had nearly exhausted all our powder in firing signals, when a native, engaged in carrying wood, at last shouted an answer to them. He had fortunately seen our encampment in the day, at the place we had directed it to—Bowanee Mut—and agreed to guide us to it. It was past ten at night before we reached it.

May 13th.—At daylight this morning we found ourselves encamped so perfectly in the midst of the jungle, that we had some difficulty in moving fifty yards without being lost in the long grass that surrounded us. A dark forest rose on each side, and in its deepest shade stood the little tomb that gave its name to the place. It was erected to the memory of some saint, who was marvelously fond of solitude; and about it were a few sheds of leaves matted together, for the shelter of those who loved his memory. A faquir, of a most unpromising figure, has long presided over it, and a few old women have established a little bazaar for gain. I could not learn much of this saint from the guardian of

his remains, who ought to have been well versed in his history, for he declared he never quitted the spot, nor thought of any thing else. He had been a very good man, however, and possessed the faculty of charming beasts as well as men by his sanctity; for the saquir assured us, that the tigers esteemed him so highly, that they had always a representative at his tomb.

"It is no matter how many of the tigers may be killed that come here," said he; "for one still appears every Thursday night, to make a salaam: he stays till day-light, and then takes his leave."

We were well pleased to hear this, and resolved to waylay him on his journey. We had passed the whole of this day in a fruitless search for one; but it happened to be Wednesday.

The country we passed over was wild and beautiful in the extreme. Many of the scenes in the upper part of India may find parallels in Europe; but, fortunately, it would be impossible to meet with one to which the magnificent solitudes we were now in could be compared. A few deer, a great many black partridges, and a brace



of floricans, were the amount of our killed : the latter is a very fine bird ; the cock has white wings, and the plumage of its back is not unlike a turkey's. Both birds are about the same size. Most of the ground we beat seemed so adapted to the lair of the tiger, that we felt convinced of finding some. We were frequently, too, thrown on the alert by the discovery of their foot-prints, but we found them not. The guide proposed leading us to a ruined tomb, that had been erected, like the one I have noticed, to the memory of a saint ; for there, he said, we should be certain of sport, for a tiger never left it, the saquir having wisely abandoned the sanctuary to their keeping. It was indeed a most probable place. It stood on a little hillock, at the foot of which ran a brook, concealed by rushes. The crumbling monument was of brick, and it was overgrown by creepers of several species, while the grass was so high as to cover the elephants.

We hunted for a long time, but the watchman was off his guard. When about to retire, the elephants suddenly became uneasy, and, curling up their trunks, trumpeted the announcement of

an enemy. Up rose a bear on his hind legs, as if to reconnoitre our proceedings; and then shuffled off so rapidly, that we could not get a shot at him. It was enough, however, to put our chargers' courage to the test, and we soon became routed. One large female elephant was so frightened, that she bore down upon the braver ones, (the phrasology of scamen may be properly adopted towards such large creatures,) and hugging them quite close, could not be forced away.

Neither the soothing nor the beating of the mahout had any effect upon her; and, at length, starting at something which sprung up before her, and which turned out to be a leveret, she made all sail for the rear; her tail up in the air and her trunk curled like a horn above her head. It was impossible to stop her. She entered a wood, and the last we saw of her rider, he was fighting with the branches of the trees. We heard them crack around, as she dashed through them, when he, squatting down at the bottom of his howdah, submitted, as he best could, to his fate, expecting, every moment, to be lodged in one of the boughs, like a bird in his cage, where

he might have sung, with the starling, "I can't get out," for the rest of the day. He lost nothing by his flight; for we soon returned to the camp, where we found him safely bestowed. His elephant had never slackened her pace, nor turned aside, from the moment she started, but made directly through the forest to the place whence we set out, being a distance, as we computed, of nearly three miles. Her alarm was not removed by the absence of danger, for, suspecting a similar arrangement for the next day, she broke from her fastenings, and endeavoured to make her escape during the night. She was, however, soon brought back, and on taking the field again, was disgraced from the castle to the baggage.

Thursday morning. We set forth, at seven o'clock, to intercept the tiger, on his visit of ceremony to Bowanee Mut, although with little hope of success; for we had searched the ground well yesterday, notwithstanding we had been assured by the saquir, that on no other day had a tiger ever been found in the neighbourhood; and strange enough, we had not left the place a quarter of an hour, when we came upon him. He

was busily engaged in devouring the carcase of a hog deer, and sprung up so suddenly, that we were in a great measure taken by surprise. We could not have interrupted him in a better occupation for making him angry; and he looked magnificent, as with a roar, that made the woods echo, he plunged through the grass. A tremendous battery was immediately opened upon him, and a hot pursuit followed.

It was a most animating scene—"Chull, chull!" "forward, forward!" was the cry of the sportsmen, every one standing up with his gun ready, and following the animal's course through the grass with most anxious eyes. "My child, my son!" "My beautiful, my brave!" were uttered in various tones, by the mahouts to the elephants, who trumpeted, and stamped, and rushed on, as if they were mad. The tiger roared and dashed along, till at last, coming to a stand, where the grass grew shorter, he received a shot that drove him desperate; then making a beautiful spring towards the nearest elephant, turned in the air, and fell. We hastened up to him, and giving three cheers, triumphed in his death. He measured nine feet

from the nose to the origin of the tail, and had a most superb skin. So the fable of the faquir was in one respect realized. We did not fail to bag our game, and handed it over to a chumar, (skinner,) that accompanied us, upon a pad elephant, for the purpose of skinning whatever we might kill. Our baggage, camels, and servants, were within view at the time, and heightened the picture considerably.

About two o'clock we reached the spot we had chosen for our encampment, on the road to Saharunpore, from the Khère pass, the westernmost opening to the valley of the Dhoon. We found two "gaowallahs" (cowherds) waiting our arrival, to inform us, that an hour or two before, a tiger had destroyed one of their herd, within shot of our tents. We went to look at it, and found it lying dead. It had no wound that could have caused its death, but a small puncture in the jugular vein, from which the animal had drunk its blood. It bore the mark of a paw on the left flank, for by that blow it must have been knocked down. We had it moved to a clearer space, in hopes of intercepting the tiger

on his road to dinner, and at four o'clock set out for that purpose. After beating about till sunset, we were returning homewards in despair, when we perceived the beast a hundred yards or so before us, stealing quietly to his food. We made the same animated charge as before, till we were stopped by a ravine, the sides of which were well wooded. I crossed, while the others hunted along the opposite side. In a short time, my elephant became very violent, stamped, and tore up the ground with its tusks, and refused to move from the spot where it had stopped.

I had a most uncomfortable ride, and had the tiger sprung up, I could not have fired upon him, I was so engaged in holding on. I was more amused than ever by the coaxing expressions of the mahout: they succeeded, after some minutes, in making the elephant move on, when he became more quiet. I then had time to look about me, and perceived the tiger crouching, like a cat, about ten yards behind. He was lying so close, that my elephant had stood within a couple of feet of him, without my seeing him. I now, however, had a fine view, and for some

moments was loth to fire, he looked so beautiful. He seemed to know the disadvantage of rising, and to be disposed to lie still as long as permitted. I fired one shot, which appeared to hit him in the back, when he rose, with a tremendous roar, and instead of charging, as I anticipated, ran into the ravine. We were all in pursuit immediately; but it was now nearly dark, and we were soon forced to give it up. He escaped instant death, to suffer a lingering one, if I am right in my conjecture of having wounded him. On passing the carcase of the bullock, we had a proof of the keenness of the vulture's scent. An hour before not one was seen; nor was the place, being so wild and far removed from all habitations, likely to be haunted by them: yet now they thronged every tree in the neighbourhood, where they sat calmly enough, apparently waiting for a signal to attack. There could not have been less than four or five hundred.

I do not believe there is a more delightful sport than that we have been for a few days engaged in. If there be any danger in it, which I cannot think there is, it is just enough to add to

its interest. The first burst of a tiger, among the wild scenery in which it is found, affords one of the most animating and exciting moments that can be enjoyed, not excepting even that of a fox. When driven desperate by its wounds the animal stands at bay, or springs upon the head of one of the elephants and brings him to the ground by its weight; the general enthusiasm that ensues, with the wild and singular scene, is beyond all description.

On the banks of the Ganges I was one of a party of twelve, in the month of May, when we met with a very large tiger in long grass, that gave us an almost unparalleled chase of four hours. He crouched so low in the grass that our elephants frequently passed and re-passed him, till some of them were driven nearly mad. I never shall forget the uproar—the wheeling of the line—the fire that was kept up—the screaming and shouting;—all was tremendous. He was a bold tiger, and attacked three different elephants. In dropping from the head of the last, which he had brought to its knees, he received his death-wound. We had surrounded



him in a small circle, and witnessed his dying rage. I cannot say of him, "He died and made no sign," for his desire of revenge was clearly pictured on his countenance to the last gasp.

I have heard that lions afford even better sport, and in the west of India they abound. A gentleman, (Mr. Rae,) attached, I believe, as surgeon to Skinner's Horse, assured me that he had, in one season, killed forty-five in the province of Hissar alone. None of them was large, but he mentioned having met with one of uncommon beauty; its skin was of the usual tawny colour, but its mane a rich glossy black, as was also the tuft on the tail.

We had a singular adventure last night, though not a very rare one. After we had been some time in bed, and indeed asleep, a violent storm of thunder and lightning, with heavy rain and wind, arose so suddenly that it knocked down every tent and nearly smothered the sleepers. When I awoke I found myself so entangled in canvass that I feared I had got into my winding-sheet. On escaping, I found our encampment the most ludicrous scene possible.

Most of the servants, as they generally do, had fled for shelter, while their masters, in their shirts, were holding the weather-ropes of their tents, with as many natives as they could collect, to prevent their being carried quite away. Our passionate fellow-traveller, of whom I have before spoken, was now of great use, for he dashed after the skulkers, and soon brought them to the height of the fray. It thundered most violently, and poured with rain, while the wildness of the scene was heightened by the screaming of the hyenas around, which seemed from their clamour to be in great numbers. We were at least two hours before we could get our tents re-arranged, and then every thing was so wet, we thought it better to sit up for the rest of the night, and laugh over the scene.

From the mouth of the Kherr Pass, where we had concluded our excursion in the jungle, instead of returning by Saharunpore, which had nothing interesting in it but the Botanical Garden, at this season of the year losing its high beauty, we resolved to choose a shorter journey across the country to Deobund, and sent for the

principal people of the next village; and questioning them about the route, learned that there was a very beautiful tope of mango trees about midway, that would suit us admirably to halt in; it was close to a village called Puneekala. To this spot, therefore, we dispatched our breakfast equipage, and started on horseback for it ourselves the next morning at day-light. We galloped quickly over the first half of the journey, and found the horses we had sent on as relays waiting for us beneath a large peepul tree, on the banks of the Calinuddy, which we crossed.

The party in advance consisted of three, including myself. We had outridden the more sober portion, who kept the guide with them, and as they went forward, realized the fable of the hare and the tortoise. In half an hour after mounting our second horses, we found ourselves in so wide a plain, bounded only by the horizon, that we felt at sea, as it were, without a compass. Following something that resembled a foot-path, we continued at a canter, till, observing a countryman in his field, I rode up and asked him if we were going the right way to

Puncealee : he replied that we were, and, little dreaming so much depended upon a letter, we hastened on. It was growing very hot, and our horses and their riders were tired and hungry. It was terrible to look up, and still worse to look round. Noon had nearly approached, "the sun stood in a copper sky," and no tents appeared to comfort us.

About twelve o'clock we reached a pretty village, with a magnificent clump of mango trees beside it, in which there were crowds of peacocks and monkeya. The name of it was Puncalo. It was so much out of the way that its quiet inhabitants were confounded by our appearance, and, as it unfortunately fell, unushered by either camel or servant: we knew not what to do; but gathering from our questions that we were astray, the most intelligent person that could be procured, who turned out to be the village barber, was summoned to a conference. He bustled up to us with all the importance the only man of science in the place had a right to assume, and stopping his razor as he approached upon the palm of his hand, announced himself ready for the work. The whimsical, though cha-

racteristic idea, that we had come in such a hurry, and so much out of our way, to be shaved by him, it was impossible to resist, and bursting into loud laughter, I fear we gave no very high notion of our intellects to the assembled "great ones of the city." The barber still stropped on, however, as resolutely as if he had been brought up in Doctor Beekerdike's retreat, and perceived the necessity of keeping our heads cool. On informing him that it was his information we sought, and not his handy-work, he granted a pompous assent, and packing away his materials, listened with a dignified composure to our demands. We learnt from him that there was a place about a coss from this called Punealee, which was probably the village we sought; we hoped that it might be so, mounted once more, and setting off at a heavy canter, reached it in half an hour.

Here again we were disappointed; this was a less frequented place than the other, and not a tree to shelter it. We told our tale to the head man of the place, who comforted us with the assurance that it must be Punealee we were in pursuit of, which was three coss

further to the eastward: there was, to be sure, he continued, a village called Puneela nearly fifteen coss or thirty miles to the westward, but it never could be that. This was indeed a discovery: it was now past one, and with tired horses we had to finish thirty miles. We returned to the first of the places that had so puzzled us, and on entering the shade of the mangoes, which we literally usurped from the monkies, we saw one portion of our caravan winking its melancholy way towards us.

In hopes that we might find something to eat and drink to refresh us, we hastily ordered an examination: a sleeping tent, a bottle of blacking, and a crate of dirty cooking-pots, formed the whole of our stray goods! We had nothing left but to gather as much smoky milk as we could find in the neighbourhood, and comforting ourselves with that, fell fast asleep. Our horses fared better; we obtained all we desired for them, and setting out again at sunset, it was nearly midnight before we reached the right Puneela. Our companions had not been able to cook a dinner, for though they had the meat,

we had the means. We adopted the plan the next day of learning not only the name of the place we were to halt at, but that of all the surrounding and intervening villages on the route.

The villagers do not appear to be a very intelligent race, when such an adventure as I have related, obliges you to endeavour to draw them a little from their own peculiar occupations and thoughts. This may be a great deal owing to their difficulty in understanding the Europeans who speak to them; for, however fluently we may converse in Hindostanee, there must be a peculiarity in the accent that will puzzle the natives, not conversant usually with any dialect but their own. They cannot, however, assist you in the least, if you go even within a letter of the right word in asking a question. Although always disposed to be obliging, their vacant stare, when you find yourself thus at fault, denotes no power of reflection. Sometimes, I fear, their want of ability is mistaken for an unwillingness to serve, and they meet the reward of such conduct undeservedly. A ridiculous mistake occurred to myself when on

one occasion I lost my way in the Doab, going across from the Ganges to the Jumna. I reached a village about eight o'clock at night, and intending to ask for a guide, which in Hindostanee is (Doura,) I applied hurriedly for a river, (Derriou,) to show me on my way. Not being attended to, I grew somewhat hasty, and repeating in a louder tone the same unfortunate word, insisted upon its being brought to me directly. It was a small village, and my clamour brought all its inhabitants about me. "A river to run in that direction," cried I, pointing towards the west with my hand, while the villagers stood eyeing me with fear and astonishment.

At length the head man, mustering courage to approach, made a profound salaam, while the crowd gathered closely round him. "Maharaja!" said he, "mighty Sir, the Jumna flows in that quarter, while behind is Gungagee, the great Ganges. Our kin? What else would you desire? We have no river here—we are poor people," continued he, as if imploring my pardon for not having a stream of some sort to accommodate me. At first this harangue was



sufficiently incomprehensible, and if it had not been for the timely arrival of my fellow-traveller, whom I had left behind, I do not know how I should have escaped from my dilemma. On his clearing up the mystery, I must say that the villagers, although they could not perceive the mistake, were not backward in finding the joke. They left us, with shouts of laughter, to procure a guide, and as he approached, I overheard many witticisms at his expense, upon the new character I had unintentionally given him. I fear I have stamped a sobriquet upon him that will continue as long as he holds his useful office in the village.

The arrangement of guides, as well as the present police system of the country under the British, is admirable. There is no delay or difficulty in the villages on the regular route, even in the depth of the night. If travelling on horseback, the guide that trots before you, on nearing the post where he should be relieved, calls out with a loud voice, "Ho! a guide!" and instantly his successor comes from his hole, and salaaming to you, runs on, without uttering

a syllable, with a blanket twisted about his shoulders, and sometimes over his head, and a long pole in his hand. They are kept in such admirable wind by their officers, that they keep up with your horse at a trot for seven or eight miles.

April 28th.—Punekala, after all our difficulty in finding it, was far from comfortable. The tops of trees in which we had pitched our camp, was so thick, that not a breath of air could reach us. We were forced to remove our beds from the shelter of the tents to the cooler one of the branches of the trees. In this manner we passed the night as agreeably as the stinging insects that abounded would permit. 'The moon' was full, and the sky as clear as could be; it was therefore no punishment to lie awake and contemplate the scene. The midnight serenade in such a place is of the most terrible description—the howling of innumerable jackals is never out of your ears from the minute night falls to the first dawn of day; for a feverish or restless sleeper no worse torture can be devised. Until I became familiar to the screaming sound, I

used to start from my sleep, and fancy some appalling calamity had driven the inhabitants of a neighbouring town to rush forth in fear and madness from their homes. Such frightful clamour might attend an earthquake or a deluge. The animals come close up to your very doors in large packs, and roar away without any apparent object, frequently standing a long time in one place, as a dog does when "baying the moon."

The hot winds are increasing in strength and heat every day, so it is not pleasant to be out after the sun has risen, for you breathe an air as hot as the breath of a furnace. By a little after seven we arrived at the town of Deobund, and took up the same ground by the side of the tank which we had occupied before, and which I have already described.

The season is too far advanced to render travelling any longer agreeable. Our party broke up, therefore, at this place, and hurried into Meerut, some on elephants, others in palanquins and on horseback; and on the 1st of May reached it, when it is necessary to commence a confinement, to continue through the hot wea-

ther. Reversing the order of nature in most animals, that become dormant during the winter, we are forced to court a torpor for the body throughout the summer season, and I fancy, too frequently, the mind is also permitted to share in it.

## CHAPTER VII.

Another visit to Hurdwar—The Valley of the Ubees—Converted Servant—Ascent to the first range of the Himalaya—Eclipse of the Sun—A whimsical Breakfast—A Mistake and a Marriage—Landour—The Dripping Rock—Preparing to start.

IN the height of the fair of 1828, I again arrived at Hurdwar on my route to the Himalaya mountains. I have given so long a description of its singular exhibitions, in my first visit, that I shall find little to say of it now. A scene that offers such inexhaustible variety, however, is never likely to grow tiresome to the traveller, whatever it may do in his description of it. I felt that I had become more familiar with the mysteries of the place, and thought that I detected old acquaintances in the merchants, and

increased veneration in the pilgrims, many of whom I had seen perform their devotions the year before.

In spite of the lesson I had received from the robbers, I chose the same shady spot without the limits of the fair. I escaped from the villainous odours of the bazaars, and the torments of the flies that are attracted by them; while the noise and din came to me softened by the distance. The most secluded spots in the neighbourhood, however, are not free from the intrusion of the merchants, who, although they have booths in the fair, love to carry their goods about to attract the notice of those who are too indifferent to seek them in the mart. When I did not move from my tent, all the treasures of the East were brought to me, and spread before my feet. Faquirs, in long strings, wound through the trees among which I was placed, and muttered the holy name in passing me; and in some snug retreat behind me were seated many merry partiers, who whiled away the time with the tom-tom and the song. The "Chubook Suwar" horsemen, who serve in the fair to ride the

horses, and exhibit their paces to those who are inclined to purchase, curveted before me as well as the trees would permit ; so, although removed from the great centre, I had a specimen of every thing that was to be seen there in constant succession, without moving in pursuit of it. A bold and hardy race of men, who would mount the wildest horse that ever yet was seen, attend in crowds about the fair to offer their services to show off a steed ; and if you but look at one, in a moment he is backed by one of these assiduous jockeys. Their only badge of office is a whip, which they exercise with fearless power. The fair was said not to be so good this year as it was the last, and I resolved upon quitting it for the Dhoon before its business was at an end.

On the opposite side of the river to Hurdwar there is a range of hills, among which one bears the name of the Silver Mountain, (Chandee Pahar,) from its having a white altar to Mahadeva erected upon its summit. This shrine is a place of pilgrimage, and being so closely situated to the fair, receives many visitors, from amusement as well as devotion. The slope of the hill

is beautifully wooded, and the path to the goddess of rather difficult access. We crossed the river by the common ferry-boat, into which were crowded an amazing number of men, women, and children, proceeding to worship at its shrine. The Ganges at this season of the year is here divided into three branches, the stony bed being left dry in as many places by the shallowness of the water; the principal one is not more than one hundred yards across—the other two are very narrow. The point upon which Mahadeva's altar stands is about six hundred feet high.

A scrambling ascent of something more than two hundred feet, over ground that seemed to be well trodden by the bare-footed pilgrims, brought us to a small plain, over which we quickly passed, then ascending to another level, found a sloping road to the sacred goal. A few Ghorkahs, with their wives and children, reached the spot with ourselves; they were an interesting party, and belonged to the regiment of Hill-men stationed within the Dhoon. One of the girls was about eleven years of age, and remarkably pretty; she was many shades fairer than the



young ladies of the plains, who at her age are all affianced wives. There is an innocence and a simplicity in the girls of the East that, notwithstanding their complexions, amount very nearly to beauty. With them, however, that fleeting flower is even more transient than in the west: before they are twenty they begin to decline in appearance, and in four or five years more are really old women, and then they do indeed become ugly.

A faquir attended the altar, and our fellow-travellers immediately commenced their adoration. They offered incense to the goddess, which was burnt in a small earthen pot before her image—a rude picture of the divine dame, modelled in clay, and painted red. They repeated a short prayer, and walked three times round the altar. One of the women, who had lately lost a son, had come to offer a propitiation for his soul: this is a very pious office among the Hindoos, and never neglected. However sad the feeling their errors must give rise to, we cannot but think they sometimes “lean to virtue’s side.” Although we may lament the de-

lusions that induce the act, we cannot but view with interest the sacrifice of a child, who has wandered a weary pilgrimage to benefit his parents' souls, as he drops his simple oblation with the most unfeigned veneration into the bosom of the holy stream. One of the men then wrote the names of the party upon the back of the altar, for he said that Mahadeva came every day to see who had prayed at her shrine, and copied their names into her book. We proposed to leave our names also for the recording angel's volume, but they declared she could not read the character. We suggested the possibility of her having a pundit in her court, who would interpret our names to her. At this they smiled, and replied, they had never thought of that, but doubtless Mahadeva knew all.

We found the descent a great deal more perplexing than the ascent: we returned, indeed, by another road, and had to scramble, like monkeys, down a precipice of sixty feet in height at least; at the bottom of it was a small lake, within a hollow of the mountain: its precincts were holy, for on the water's edge was a larger

figure of the divinity, in the same coarse manner as the one that presides over the summit, and with as little of the goddess in it.

On the branches of the trees above this lake were a number of bees'-nests: the insects appearing to be swarming, and the natives made signs to us to be quiet, lest our voices should draw them upon us. It was a sufficiently dangerous passage, and we passed it with the silence and caution of travellers over the glaciers of the Alps. Had we drawn an avalanche of bees about our ears the consequences would have been little less fatal. At the end of this pass there was a small temple, in very uninterrupted solitude. The Brahmin who presided at it might have been the keeper of the bees, for we saw no other living things about him that could be turned to use: birds there were in plenty, but they were far beyond his reach—the jungle fowl, black partridge, and a few pheasants. It was in all respects what Lord Byron calls “A populous solitude of birds and bees.”

On coming to the margin of the river again, the fair presented an animated and interesting

spectacle. We had set out very early, and the merchants and their goods were still in repose; now, however, all were again collected. A great portion of the fair seemed to be held in the bed of the river, as well as on the banks of it; and we had, in crossing, a grand display of bathers, at the foot of the sacred ghaut. This is a very fine flight of stone steps, built at the expense of the Company. A small temple stands on one side of a platform at the top of them; while on the other is a row of little apartments, nearly level with the water, in which the Brahmins usually reside: they are generally white-washed, and decorated with red mouldings or cornices within and without. Crowds of these portly personages are seated at the doors, to perform their mysterious rites; and I have heard strange tales of the manner in which they abuse their sacred offices. As I do not propose, however, to propagate scandal against them, I will pass them over in silence. The women occasionally deposit their ornaments with these priests when they descend to the river to bathe;

and the profane declare, they often find difficulty in recovering them.

Until the government constructed the ghaut that now gives so much facility to the pilgrims, a visit to Hurdwar was attended with great danger, particularly on every twelfth year, when it is held highly meritorious to bathe in this spot. At a precise moment, calculated by astronomers, the sacred shell sounds, and all rush to the river, carrying every body they meet in their course with them. At the last grand festival, several hundreds were crushed to death; and the soldiers who were placed at the ghaut to prevent confusion, were swept into the river, and drowned.

After the ablution is complete, the pilgrims, with their transparent scarfs about them, move up the stairs to the temple, touching every step with the back of the right hand, and then placing it on the forehead, and, possibly, muttering a prayer at the time. Within the temple, at the top of the stairs, is a large bell, which is rung continually while the ceremony of bathing lasts. The European visitors, mounted upon elephants,

frequently ride into the water, where they may stand above the scene, and gaze without interruption upon it.

The road into the valley of the Dhoon is a very fine one, cut over the river in the bosom of the hills, and built up with masonry on the outward side. Above it is a prettily-situated bungalow, which commands a magnificent view of the winding river, and the hills around it. At the end of this pass, and just beneath the hill, stands a large lake, by the banks of which there is a small pagoda. It is very retired and pretty; and several English visitors had pitched their tents near it, in order to be away from the dust and tumult of the fair.

I observed a small door, cut in the rocky summit of the hill, over the lake, and about twenty feet above it, to which many people were ascending, by ladders fastened at its threshold. Garlands of flowers hung round it, and an aromatic smell on approaching it, gave intelligence of some dark mystery being performed within it. It was the sanctuary of the god of fruitfulness; and many wives were engaged in imploring the

blessing of a progeny. I did not venture to intrude, on discovering to whom it was sacred; and indeed my near approach seemed to cause some uneasiness among those who waited around it.

A regiment of Ghorkas, natives of Nepaul, who have the reputation of being remarkably brave soldiers, was marched into Hurdwar during the fair, from Dehra, the capital of the valley which is their principal station. They are very properly trained and dressed as riflemen, and reminded me much of the Malay corps in the island of Ceylon: their complexions and features are perfectly like that people, and seem to me to form a gradation between the Chinese and the Tartar. I never saw more really good-humoured looking men, and I understand their countenances do not belie their dispositions. Many instances of their courage were afforded by the late Nepaul war; particularly in the surprise of one or two of our posts at night, when they rushed to the attack of superior parties to their own, frequently pressing so close, as to cut our men over their firelocks with their singularly-

shaped swords. The European dress becomes them, I think, more than it does any other class of natives. To the handsome men of the Rajpoot caste it is a great disfigurement. I have often regretted that some more suitable costume had not been introduced among them, than the ill-made jacket, and scanty trowsers, that they are condemned to wear. When in their own loose dress they have the most graceful figures possible. When I see them in uniform, I am reminded too much of the pictures painted upon targets, at which recruits are taught to fire. They are as fine and well-disciplined a race of men, forgetting their colour, as can be anywhere found; and if their uniforms were more suitable to their habits and appearance, would be increased tenfold in value.

Deowallah, which is about eighteen miles from Hurdwar, was the name of the ground on which we encamped the first day of our halting within the valley of the Dhoon. The road, after passing the lake I have mentioned, was for some time level; it then wound over a richly wooded hill, making one of the most beautiful passes I ever



beheld, not excepting even the magnificently wild one within a short distance of Kandy in Ceylon, which I had always considered the most superb piece of eastern scenery in the world. The view from this pass, however, far exceeded it. It was bounded by the Himalaya mountains—the snowy range, white and clear as possible. The sun had not long risen, and I could gaze without being dazzled at all the beauties it illuminated. Below and above the road was thickly wooded, and displayed a great variety of foliage; while the creepers, that are so numerous and so rich in this country, wound about the rocks and the trees in the loveliest manner. The great contrast from the sameness of the plains gave the scene a double charm. We could easily understand why the green vales of Arabia are so precious to the Arab.

We passed through a considerable jungle, after we had quitted this passage, with now and then some patches of cultivation, and about ten o'clock found our tents pitched on a clear spot near the road, not very far from a rest-house and police-station (or cholee). Behind us was a

rapid trout stream, from which we caught several fish, and, though small, they were exceedingly good.

From this spot we enjoyed a very fine view of the hills, and could perceive many tents perched upon the different peaks, as if they had been flying in the air. At night, the fires about them burning like signal lights, with the blaze among the long grass, which is purposely fired, and which runs at this season like a train along the hills, had a beautiful effect. I have heard that the burning of the grass is sometimes caused by the friction of the dried reeds and leaves, which, during the present parched period of the year, never fails to kindle a flame. This may be the case, but the mountains are seldom, I fancy, without moisture enough to prevent it.

We found a string of mules just preparing to start from the rest-house, when we arrived this morning. They belonged to an English clergyman, who was on his route to Kunawur, a province beyond the snowy range, and without the Pass of Burunda; the crest of which is fifteen thousand feet above the sea. It leads, through

the country of the shawl wool goat, (Oondest.) to Chinese Tartary, at the frontier village of which it is necessary to return, or run the risk of being carried state prisoner to Peking.

The reverend gentleman had crossed the Sutlege last year, and gave an amusing description of the manner of passing it. Sometimes the guide rides over upon an inflated goat-skin, (a boracha,) while the traveller sits quietly upon his shoulders. The other method is adopted, I think, in South America: the passenger sits in a species of swing, which is suspended from a rope that stretches across the stream, and is thus towed over.

We were very much interested in the appearance of the principal servant of the clergyman, who seemed to be more useful and intelligent than any native I had ever met with. He was a remarkably handsome man, and had the bearing of a high brahmin. He was, however, a Christian, and not long since had been baptized by his present master. He was a sort of Haji Baba, and before he offered himself for baptism, had experienced many strange adventures. In his early

days, (he seemed to be now about forty,) he had been a soldier, and had served in Java, which is always a matter of great pride to a native. When he obtained his discharge, he became a mendicant priest and wandered about the country. He had visited every shrine of note for sanctity in the East, from Thibet to Cape Comorin, and found his errant life, I have no doubt, a very delightful one.

One day, when performing his prayers in the Ganges, an Englishman passing down the river, happened to stop close by him, and entering into conversation, presented him with a translation of some portion of the Scriptures, or a religious tract, I do not remember which: he was then journeying to Bhurtpore, where, for some offence, he was cast into prison. The perusal of this new book solaced him in his confinement, and by his own account wrought in him a great change. On being liberated, harassed by his doubts, he went to the college of Benares to consult the learned brahmins on the subject of his newly-acquired knowledge. He could hardly have gone to a worse place. They gave him the only reply he could have expected:—"Throw

away the brick, or you will lose your caste." He was resolved, however, and applied to the chaplain to baptize him. Unfortunately in such applications there is always much to mistrust. It was necessary to make every inquiry about his character, and it turned out that he bore the reputation of great piety as a brahmin. To prove his determination to be one no longer, he took the sacred thread from his shoulder, and tearing it in pieces, brought it to the clergyman, and said, "Now I will no longer be a brahmin, you cannot refuse my wish." He was at length gratified, and has as yet given no cause for doubting his sincerity. He has undergone some little persecution, too; he has had many taunts to bear, and blows to submit to, since he has been in service as a Christian. Upon one occasion, when riding on a message for his master, he stopped at a desert to bait his pony, and something in his appearance exciting the suspicions of the people belonging to it, they questioned him about his cause; he answered himself a convert to a better faith, and finally denounced their stupidity. His answers were not disposed to a controversy, and

soon raised a clamour against him; the whole village was alarmed at the uproar, and, hastening to the scene, took part in the sentence of expulsion, which was immediately pronounced upon him. He narrowly escaped with his life, and was forced to abandon his pony to the mercy of the champions of Brahma.

He had completely thrown aside all prejudices, and seemed to be a perfect factotum, full of bustle, and, I thought, no little self-importance. As he had visited all the places of pilgrimage within the mountains, he promised to be a good guide to his master, if he answered no other purpose.

There is a degree of ostentation among those men who are "dressed in a little brief authority" in the East that is perfectly ludicrous; they possess more than any other nation in the world the pride of place; and the fuss with which this gentleman dispatched his mules and coolies, looking under his eyelids at us for applause, while he harangued those beneath him, showed that he enjoyed his full share of it.

A great portion of our baggage was unfortu-

nately carried in hackeries. We had not been able to obtain sufficient camels for the whole party, and, as frequently happens, those things we most required were packed in the slowest conveyance; our tents, therefore, were unfurnished until long past midnight; for one of the leading carts having met with an accident in the beginning of the journey, delayed the others, and I have no doubt the drivers sat quietly round the ruins for some time, smoking all thoughts of our forlorn situation away. We were obliged in consequence to halt a second day at Deowallah.

The surrounding country is wild, and full of black partridges (we have not seen any gray ones since we entered the Dhoon) and jungle fowl, there are also many deer, with tigers and leopards in abundance. I heard this morning of an officer having had a serious rencontre with one of the former, while engaged in shooting deer; he had wounded one, and was pursuing it, as it limped away from him, with his gun upon his shoulder; in leaping over a small drain, he interrupted a tiger at his meal, who immediately sprung upon him, and endeavoured to seize him by the cheek. For-

unately the gun intervened and he was saved ; some of his people running up, screamed aloud and scared the animal away. His shoulder I heard was much torn, but his cheek escaped with a kiss ; the barrels of his gun served to gag the tiger, which left the marks of his teeth upon it, for they were, I learnt, literally bitten through.

This morning we rode to Dehra, the capital of the valley, which stands on a plain in the centre of it. The houses are generally European ; bungalows with gardens round them, after the usual manner of cantonments in the upper provinces. This is the head-quarters of the Ghorka rifle corps, that I have noticed before. All about it is well cultivated. We are encamped in a *tope*, or grove of trees, beyond the town, at the skirts of a field of very fine wheat, in which stands a white pillar to the memory of some officers who were killed at Kullunga, which hill stands immediately above it. The fort that was erected upon it is now dismantled—scarcely a stone remains. It was sad to think that so trifling a place should have cost so much blood. General Gillespie, who was the commander of



the expedition, fell here : a monument is erected to him in the churchyard of Meerut. Kullunga is the first day's march from the valley to Rudrinath, by an entrance to the mountains, which is not so generally used, since the occupation of the range above Rajpore by the British.

The centre of the Dhoon, in which we are now encamped, is considerably higher than Hurdwar, one thousand three hundred feet : we have reached it without the appearance of making any ascent. The mountains which bound it, so effectually prevent the approach of the hot south-west winds, that we have experienced a delightful change in the climate already. A rapid stream rushes by the side of the road near us, which calls all the damsels of the neighbouring villages to its margin, to exercise their proper duties of drawing water for their household. They are much fairer than the women of the plains, and less averse to display their beauties. Their villages are so secluded, that it is difficult to conjecture whence they come : a narrow road between two high banks leads to

one of the nearest, and the women pass backwards and forwards in strings like ants, and are fully as earnest in their business. There are a great number of topes of trees in the neighbourhood, in one of which is the encampment of a very high civil officer, superintendent of police in the upper provinces, who is on his route to Jumnoutri. Three hundred Hill-men are seated on their haunches around his tent, looking wild and astonished at all they perceive. They arrived this morning from the interior of the mountain districts to carry his baggage, and are busily preparing to start—in which preparation, with them, as with those of a lower region, talking seems to be the principal feature.

It is not to be supposed that travellers in the East sacrifice any portion of their comforts or luxuries when they quit their houses to lead wandering lives in tents—on the contrary, they appear to increase them. Men of great authority and large means—which terms, by-the-bye, are nearly synonymous—move with a splendour that cannot easily be conceived in the dull West. I hope the gentleman of whom I write will excuse

my citing him as an example. He had, among other elegances, a piano in his tent; and each hill coolly carries from thirty to forty pounds, I think three hundred will be able to procure him all that can be desired in his more arduous trip over the mountains.

The valley of the Dhoon is, I believe, as quiet and as happy as such a lovely and sequestered spot should be. The magistrate, whom I saw at Hurdwar, dressed, by-the-bye, in something between the English and native costume, is very highly praised for the good he has effected since he has been within the Hill districts; and he seems, as far as I can yet judge, to have a tractable people to deal with. He is averse, I have heard, and perhaps in some respects properly so, to too general a rage for visiting the mountains.

The English, who are at all times very peremptory and capricious in their travelling habits, have been sometimes a little rough and exacting towards the peaceable inhabitants of these territories, which cannot be sufficiently lamented, for they are the most willing creatures pos-

sible, and are not likely to be improved or fitted for civilization by receiving unfavourable impressions of those who are destined to effect it.

We rode in little more than an hour this morning to Rajpoor, where we found every thing in the greatest bustle. Since the arrival of the invalid detachments at Landour, a large bazaar has been established in this place, and coolies are constantly ascending the Hill with sacks of meal and other matters. We sometimes gain a view of long strings of them winding round magnificent crags, which appear to hang over deep precipices. Their diminutive figures, seen at that distance, remind me of the moving pigmies that are occasionally introduced to heighten the scenery of a melodrama.

Within a thick forest beside Rajpoor we heard there were a great many pheasants, and set forth in pursuit of them. We went on foot, and after passing the heat of the day in an arduous chase, returned exhausted, without having had the satisfaction of seeing even one. The only living things we disturbed were a few Guianas sheltering themselves under detached fragments of rock from the strength of the sun, which was so

great that not even the lizard tribe could venture to bask in it.

Rajpoot is three thousand four hundred feet above the sea, and six hundred above Dehra : being so closely situated beneath the high mountains, on one side, while all the others are surrounded by thick forests, it is the closest and least liable to be relieved by a current of air, of any spot I ever had the ill-fortune to pass a few hours in. Many of the trees in the adjoining woods are very large and beautiful, particularly some of the Toon. The Landour range is five thousand feet above this village, and about two hours' walk from it.

On the afternoon of the 12th of April, I quitted the Valley of the Dhoon, which in all respects deserves the name of beautiful. It lies between the Himalaya mountains and a low range that bounds it towards the plains, and serves as an outer wall to the formidable fastnesses that divide India from Tartary and Tibet. It has every variety of scenery, and the Ganges and Jumna flow through it.

Rajpoot, even if the proximity to the mountains had not made us impatient to ascend them

was in too great a bustle to tempt us to linger there. Felling of wood, blasting of rocks, and all the indications of new roads and a new settlement, made it a busy scene. It is the first season of the convalescent depôt for the European troops being established on the ridge of Landour; as yet it is merely an experimental one, and all are anxious for its success, and active in endeavouring to promote it.

I had borrowed a ghoint, or hill pony, and about four o'clock commenced my ascent to Missoura-ka-teeba, the name of the line of peaks to the westward of Landour. The roads were yet unfinished in many parts, but it was surprising how my pony contrived to scramble over every obstacle. I soon found the proper way would be to leave all to him. These animals are so sure-footed, that they never betray their rider's trust, though they may occasionally shake his nerves; for creeping to the very edge of the precipice, they show him upon how slight a thread his safety hangs;—but one false step, and where would the traveller be?

The roads are not well traced, which is a

great pity. For equal labour, the natural obstacles being few, would make a pass to rival the celebrated passes of the Alps. I do not despair, however, of seeing a carriage road, some day yet, to the depot; and the source of the Jumea may become a fashionable watering-place, for one lady has already braved, and overcome its difficulties.

As we rose above the vale, and wound round the hills, we changed the aspect delightfully; and every beauty that we lost was succeeded by greater beauties still; at length, on reaching Gerree Pabor, a small plain about midway up, the Dhoon was lost to our view. Here we found ourselves in a new region, among raspberries and cherry-trees, wild roses and blackberries! On a little peak, above where a small mountain-spring falls into a fountain, are a few huts; and the only clear spot round about is an area of two or three acres, beneath the height on which they stand.

This ground is generally chosen as the first day's halting-place for the invalids, who are ascending the hills in pursuit of the health they

lost in the plains. Many, no doubt, will have cause to bless it, for the air is pure and delicious. It has already, however, been marked as the last stage on earth for one whose race was closed last night. There is something extremely melancholy in the desolation of the spot, where one, who had passed so many scenes of danger, had come to die at last. He had been in nearly every battle from Talavera to Waterloo: and but a short time ago had escaped from the most appalling calamity,—for he was on board the *Kent* East Indiaman, when she was burnt,—to be buried where no Christian ever lived, and none before him ever died! When Napoleon, however, lies on the rock of St. Helena, it is unnecessary to moralize on the fate of a British captain! \*

On quitting this spot, the road becomes more steep, and the scenery more wild. It was evening when we reached Missoura. The height of

\* Captain Sir Charles Farrington, 51st Regiment. I hope I may be excused this passing tribute to the memory of a brother officer, whose tomb, if erected as it was intended, will, in all probability, give his name to the spot.



this range above Rajpore is about five thousand feet, and eight thousand above the level of the sea. The thermometer, at the foot of the hills, stood, in my tent, at 90° : it was here only 52°. It seemed like changing suddenly from summer to winter, so intense was the cold during the night.

April 15th.—One of our first days on the mountains was distinguished by an eclipse of the sun, which I hope bodes no evil. It was visible for about an hour, ending, I think, at half-past four P. M. It did not seem to create any sensation among the Hill people, who were scattered about at their work, as if the sun had been shining as usual. In the plains, the Hindoos, on the banks of the Ganges, hasten to the stream upon such an event, and standing in it, wait till the eclipse is at its height, then dip their heads in the water, and taking some in their hands, throw it towards the sun, as if to purify him from the evil spirit that had cast a veil over his splendour. I have never observed the Mahometans of India similarly occupied; but in Upper Egypt, some years ago, while enjoying myself, on

a moonlight night, among the splendid ruins of Luxor, a large mob of Arabs had collected round the building, and seemed to be waiting, with anxious expectation, for some great marvel that was to occur in the heavens, for their eyes were all turned upwards. There was an eclipse of the moon; and the moment it commenced, a loud murmur arose among the people, increasing till it was at its height. The planet was but half concealed, and then arose a tumult that perfectly deafened me. I mixed among the people, who were menacing the moon with frightful gestures, shouting, to the utmost of their power to the devil, to abandon his prey. "Satan, avant!" was the universal cry through the desolate colonnades of Thebes. Such a singular scene, acted upon such a spot, could not easily be forgotten.

As the most ignorant are likely to be the most fanciful, I expected to learn some additional absurdity from the behaviour of the Hill men; but their philosophy disturbed itself little about a matter that occurred so far from them.

There were no houses completed yet on the ridge; and the officers and soldiers, with all



could desire. His tent is placed beneath a high peak, that shelters him from the north wind, which, passing over the snowy mountains, blows extremely cold. The trees on the northern side are bare and blasted, while all to the south is luxuriant and beautiful. The southern slope, too, is covered with the rhododendron, in flower, with no intermixture of pines; while, on the opposite side, the firs are in great number, with very few other trees.

Neither the expense nor trouble of building is very great—there is abundance of timber around, which it is only necessary to cut down some time previously, and leave on the ground to season. Bricks may be made close at hand, or a house may spring at once from the quarry, if stone be more desirable. Labour, I fancy, is moderate, and plenty enough; although the ingenious portion of the workmen must come from the plains. A small village of thatched huts is already established within the limits of the post, where there is a sufficient bazaar for the use of the soldiery.

The only unfortunate circumstance attending

the place is the difficulty of procuring water. We can hear it roaring around, but find no means of drawing it towards us, but by the tedious carriage of mules. I hear there is a wide plain on the summit of a range to the north-east of this, in the centre of which stands a good-sized lake. Such a position would be admirable for the purpose, although, perhaps, adding another day to the journey from the plains would neutralize any advantage to be derived from a finer situation.

“The hills are white over with sheep;” we have therefore abundance of mutton; but consideration for the prejudices of the natives has prevented the slaughter of beef: indeed the butchers have refused to kill cattle, lest some revengeful mountaineer should subject them to the same death. This difficulty will wear away, no doubt, and “the divinity that doth hedge” a cow will at length be broken through in the Himalaya, as it has long been in a more holy vicinity—the city of Benares. Although the venerated animal is not slain within the limit of that sacred town, the cantonment of Secrole, within two or three miles, is, I fancy, frequently

enough stained with the precious blood. It would be whimsical to uphold, that eating beef would tend to the civilization of any class of people; but when we consider that in doing so we overcome some of the greatest prejudices of a false religion, I think much advantage may be gained by it: the outworks being carried, the citadel will surrender the sooner. This is a motive for those who love the fare of old England to continue their devotion to it, which, perhaps, may not yet have occurred to them; I am happy, therefore, to suggest it.

The effect that the climate of the hills has already had upon the children is most astonishing. Their rosy cheeks, so rare generally in the plains, would rival those of the healthiest country babes in England. Already many families have arrived since the snow has cleared away, and many have chosen sites for houses to be built next spring. This is done something after the manner of taking possession of a barren island—the first discoverer leaves a mark of some description to warn a future visiter that the government of the

spot has been already assumed by a more fortunate navigator.

In roaming among the hills to-day, I met with the string of mules belonging to the clergyman I had seen in the Dhoon. While winding round the most precipitate spot, the leading one suddenly disappeared; and I soon saw him rolling over and over to the bottom of a deep precipice. His panniers broke from his back, and went bounding away before him, bursting open in their flight, and spreading all their contents abroad. They contained not only the treasure of the gentleman, but some scientific instruments; and we watched them with great interest, hoping that every tree they rested against would stop their course: they seemed, however, only to pause for a good leap; and we learnt, from an occasional faint echo, that they were continuing a weary journey long after we lost sight of them. The poor mule, disencumbered of its load, saved itself before it had fallen more than half way beyond ken, and escaped with a few bruises.

Although the Europeans had been so short a

time on the hills, there was still something for a clergyman to do : there were several children to christen, and neither Hymen nor the God of love had thought it too cold a region to take beneath their wings.

On my ascent from Rajpoot, I was overtaken by a fine young man, a European serjeant, superintending the roads, who "presuming," as he said, "that I was a reverend gentleman," had to beg my aid in joining his to the hand of some sable, or to speak more poetically, some nut-brown maid, whose charms had enlivened these bleak retreats, and whose heart—"for stony limits cannot keep love out"—had yielded even among the cold, flinty rocks of Landour. I must take his mistake as a compliment to myself, although the church could scarcely have approved of such a son ; a broad-brimmed straw-hat with a pair of mustachios should not have suggested such an application to the serjeant.

Half-caste women are frequently chosen by the British soldiers for their wives, and I believe they make extremely good ones. In habits and morals, I am sorry to say, they are far before



our own countrywomen of the same class in the East, and the domestic comforts of the two families are not to be compared. Soldiers are sometimes allowed to select them from the Government School in Calcutta, without, I have understood, any previous acquaintance. The blushing maids are drawn out in a favourable light, and formed into "a line of beauty," when the Cœlebs are introduced; and a tantalizing position. I dare say, they find themselves in: they are not long, however, in fixing upon their mates, and the marriages turn out generally very well. They reap the advantage, in such matches, of Mrs. Malaprop's consolatory scheme, for, like that erudite lady, their governors think that "preference and aversion do not become a young woman," and give them no opportunity of beginning their career with either.

Such unsentimental wooing, however, is little worse than the custom that has long prevailed in the land of music and of song—romantic Italy; their courtships are nearly as abrupt, and, in justice to those of whom I particularly write, I must say, their marriages are not half so com-

mendable, for the half-caste women generally behave with great propriety.

During the mornings I fancied, when roaming over the hills, that I had been transported by some good genii from India to Europe. I recognized with pleasure, as old acquaintances, daisies, cowslips, primroses, and violets—raspberries, strawberries, cherries and peaches—walnut-trees, figs and mulberries. It was a luxury, none who have not experienced can appreciate, to be able to wander about all day long without a shelter from the sun, or without feeling fatigue from the exertion. The resident of Bengal, who gallops to his home the moment the sun rises the least above the horizon—as if Phaeton were whipping the steeds of Apollo in pursuit of him,—finds himself, after a few days' enjoyment of mountain air, quite a different being; and the poor soldiers, who would have pined in the hospital till past all hope of benefit, have in the thriving establishment at Landour an opportunity of regaining their strength before it is so utterly gone as to render the words 'invalided' and 'buried' nearly synonymous.

The country—for saving lives is conferring a benefit—is mainly indebted to the late commander-in-chief, Lord Combermere, for the Convalescent Depôt at Landour; and the army of the East will have reason to be grateful to his lordship for his exertions in so humane a cause—for founding a temple to health, where the ravages of sickness are so keenly felt. No spirit of economy, I hope, will invade its precincts. This remorseless demon, I know, is hovering over the luxurious East, but may its craving be satisfied by some trifling privations; and may the advantages gained to the service by the timely saving of valuable lives, and the consideration that where many important functionaries would have returned for several years to England, a few months may now suffice to restore them to their duties,—not only weigh with the Government to maintain, but to improve and increase it.

In a part of the world so wild, and some years ago so little known, it is an object of high interest to see an English colony arising. The progress of the British arms has been so rapid, and the addition of territory so extraordinary within the last thirty years in the East, that we

cease to view any new acquisition with surprise. Where our dwellings, however, rise to the skies, and we creep gradually into the bosom of "the snowy Imaus which roving Tartar bounds," we cannot fail to notice the progress of civilization without pride.

Landour and Missoura form the first line of mountains; the first-named point being some degrees higher than the latter. It is a range of successive peaks, so irregularly placed, that if you stand upon any one of them you appear to be the centre of a circle of others. Mr. Fraser, in his "Tour of the Himalayah," published about ten years ago, likens them to pointed waves just on the eve of breaking; and a better simile could not be found. The summits of those peaks are the sites of the newly-commenced buildings; they are generally abrupt and rugged, and their sides descending nearly perpendicularly into gloomy chasms that appear to have no bottom. The sides of these precipices, however, are rendered less sombre by thick woods of the spear-leaved oak, enlivened by the arbore-scent rhododendron, now in full flower. The

new houses above the town, and each to appear  
 like a little island surrounded by a deep ravine,  
 its form and aspect it affords, particularly at  
 night, when all are lit up, a most picturesque  
 scene.

There are many inconveniences in these new  
 houses yet to be noticed. Water, from their  
 peaked shapes, is not to be found above; it flows  
 only to the girds below. And as the labour of  
 a visit to a higher neighbourhood will to an invalid  
 be very great, he must reckon upon being many  
 minutes before he can even say "How d'ye do?"  
 after having gazed the castle above him. A bar-  
 rack is to stand the lowest; the commandant's  
 house the highest, and some hundred feet the  
 difference between them. The snowy range is  
 visible from the north-east point of Landour, and  
 magnificent it is; the sight of it every day kept  
 alive my impatience to approach it. I hastened  
 my preparations, and on the 1st of May was for-  
 tunate enough to assemble my guides and  
 coolies, all apparently as anxious as myself, to  
 make a pilgrimage to Gungoutri.

We experienced two or three violent storms  
 while remaining on this range. During one in

which a heavy shower of hail fell, the thermometer sunk nine degrees in fewer minutes—from seventy-five to sixty-six degrees, it rose again as rapidly. Although it was not more than four o'clock in the afternoon when the hail fell, it was still on the ground the following morning: a proof of the coldness of the night-air. There was little probability of our rest being interrupted either by the heat or mosquitoes.

While my baggage was undergoing an alteration for its novel journey, I descended the hill to Rajpoor, thence crossed several ravines, and passed along the beds of others to visit "Sansadhara," or the dripping rock, a singular phenomenon, situated at the head of a dell, through which a rapid stream runs, between two lines of hills towards the valley of the Dhoon. It is an overhanging rock, about fifty feet high, through which water pours from above, in innumerable little streams, like a perpetual shower of rain! The never-abating action of the water has worn the rock into many fantastic shapes: and, crusting round the moss and fibres of the roots of trees, has given to it almost the appearance of a spar cavern. In several places the water has

worn little reservoirs for itself, which are always full. It is cool, clear, and pleasant to the taste. As all things out of the common course of nature are endowed by the Hindoos with something of a sacred character, Sansadhara is the resort of pilgrims who are on their way to spots of higher veneration, both from their character and situation. They offer their prayers to Mahadeo, to whom it is dedicated, and perform their ablutions in the holy cisterns, and, though last, not the least essential of their duties, leave their mite with the brahmin who protects it.

The 2nd of May was passed in the greatest activity, and among a most extraordinary race of beings. I had succeeded, after much trouble, in getting sixty bearers for my baggage and tents, and had more difficulty to load them, than I should have had with so many wild elephants. The weight they usually carry is from fifty to sixty pounds: some can bear as much as eighty. The burthen is supported on the back, and kept on by a strap passing over the points of the shoulders, nothing crossing the breast. It never falls lower than the hips, but it frequently rises

to two or three feet above the head. It is necessary that it should be very narrow, never extending beyond the shoulders; for the paths are barely wide enough to allow the men to pass; and the smallest projection, by coming in contact with a pointed rock, or even a tuft of heather, may precipitate the bearer and his load to the bottom of some fathomless precipice, so fearful are the places over which it is necessary to scramble.

I had had many baskets made, of about four feet high, and one foot broad, into which I packed my food and clothes. My tents were divided into ten parts. I endeavoured to allot my baggage in the most even manner among the bearers, but that attempt alone induced them to object to carry it. Many would leave lighter loads to take up heavier ones, merely to show that they must have a choice of their own. If I insisted upon their moving, they would sit coolly down on the ground, and declare they would not lift so great a weight for any consideration. One or two took up either a chair or a tea-kettle, and insisting upon it they were heavy enough, set off with them.



I had been threatening and coaxing for three or four hours without effect, and almost abandoned the expedition in despair, at its outset; when I overheard one of my servants praising the shoulders and limbs of a stout, naked fellow, who was sulking by his load, and saying, he wondered so fine a figure should not be able to move what a little man like him could lift so easily. He had discovered the secret spring; and the mountaineer rising with a smile, took up his burthen, and pronounced himself ready to proceed. I took the hint, and commenced an assault once more under that powerful engineer, flattery. I praised their forms, and admired their strength, with as much show of rapture as a connoisseur would display in behalf of the Apollo or Hercules. They assumed the greatest good-humour, seeing, however, into my meaning, and soon stood ready for departure. To any thing like severity they are intractable—violent if you irritate—obstinate, to the utmost degree, if you abuse them. To good-humour they yield every thing; and I considered myself very fortunate in making so timely a discovery.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Setting out—First view of the Jumna—Fording the Jumna—  
 Women of Luckware—Temple—Brahmins of the Hills—  
 Nonsano—The Women at the Spring—Nepheuse Fort—  
 Shepherd's Pipe—Katheo—Medecin malgré lui—An en-  
 charmed Garden—Curioaty—Anecdote of a wise man—  
 Bazaar—A quarrel—Lakha Mundul—Beautiful View  
 Talls—A dancing Village—A Wife for sale—Miraculous  
 Pool—A matrimonial dilemma—Superb Cataract—Mineral  
 Spring—Lying in wait for an Unicorn.

MAY 3rd.—Yesterday's labour being merely in-  
 tended as a rehearsal, this day, about two o'clock,  
 the piece was acted with great success: and our  
 journey commenced to the source of the Jumna.  
 We formed a large party, and not a very common  
 one. My brother, Lieut. J—— S——, of the  
 Bengal army, and myself, with guns on our  
 shoulders, and long sticks in our hands, led the

van; our servants, Mahometans and Hindoos, carrying their cooking vessels, followed—the coolies, moving one by one, apparently bent double, their usual mode of walking when loaded, divided into three bodies, each headed by its tindal, or guide, carrying a long spear in his hand. We formed a most picturesque and novel scene, as thus, in a long string, we wound round the hills or through the woods. A flock of sheep and goats completed the picture—our shepherd, bearing a crook in his hand, and a pipe too—but, alas! it was for tobacco! of which the natives of the hills are so fond, that they will thank you for such a present, more than for “golden store.”

We passed through a rough and difficult path, along the crest of a ridge to the north of Missouri; and when about six miles from it, descended, by a succession of terraces, to a streamlet below, on the bank of which, and not very far from a little village, we encamped.

As we had commenced the first day's journey in heavy rain, we had not the opportunity of gazing much on the beauty of the scenery.

I lost no time in paying a visit to the first mountain habitation we had met with. It is situated on a narrow causeway, between two deep dells, and at the foot of a high range of mountains, called Kandon. Up the faces of the hills, in terraces rising one above the other, each supported by a stone wall, appears the cultivated ground. The corn is ripe, and the amphitheatres, at the foot of which the cultivators dwell, look beautiful. The houses are constructed of loose stone, and thatched with grass. They consist of two stories—the one above being occupied by the family, and the lower one inhabited by their cattle.

The people being accustomed, from their vicinity to the new settlement, to meet white faces, are not averse to show themselves: they have learned, too, the advantage of money, and offer what little they possess for sale—a most unusual event among the mountaineers; for as if ashamed of trade, they require great pressing to induce them to part with any thing, even for a sum above its value.

May 4th.—We this morning passed over the Kandoa range of hills, and descended to a mountain stream at their foot, which having forded, we rose to the summit of the Budraj chain, and after a difficult ascent of about two hours, reached it a little after noon. One of the Hindoos, who had gained the highest part, stopped suddenly, and making a low salaam, called out as loudly as he could, Jummoona! Jummoona! upon hearing which every one ran to catch the first glimpse of the Jumna among the mountains; the coolies threw down their loads, and the servants their cooking pots, and thought of nothing but the beautiful river beneath, winding with the utmost swiftness round the bases of the high-peaked hills. The sight restored my followers to the strength and spirit that many of them were fast losing. My Hindoo servants, unaccustomed to such hard labour, could scarcely bend their knees: and I was afraid that my Mahomedans, not being encouraged by the hopes of advantage from a holy pilgrimage, might desert, for they also seemed to repent of having followed me even

two days "in search of the picturesque." The Jumna, however, *parvis componere magna*, acted as a Moscow to my dispirited army.

After dwelling for an hour on the beautiful prospect, we descended by a winding path of loose stone, to a dark and thickly-wooded dell, through which "roared and ran" a furious torrent, over which with some difficulty we passed. After we had crossed, it was tremendous to look up to the summit of the ridge we had left. The descent occupied more than an hour, and seemed nearly perpendicular. In another hour we arrived at a village called Butolee, and pitched our tents.

During the walk we saw not a living thing: not a bird of the most common note, to break the silence of the journey; and the place we had reached appeared to be totally deserted: the men had been taken away to assist in the new buildings at Landour, and the women had thought it necessary to hide themselves. They were not long in regaining confidence, and towards sunset ventured to come out to the neighbouring spring for water. They are much

fairer than the women of the plains, but do not differ very materially from them in features. We have evidently not yet come among the mountain habitations. Butolee is similar to our village of yesterday, and that approaches in many respects to some of the places on the plains.

I began to fear that my encampment after so long a journey would have been converted into an hospital; it was laughable, although sufficiently pitiable, to see my poor Hindoos crawl, at long intervals from each other, up to my tent, and declare it was impossible to move. I suggested many plans for their relief, but brandy was the only one on which they would rely; and it was by promising that their joints should be rubbed every day with this panacea that I succeeded in comforting them. The natives of the East, although they shun all intemperance, have an idea that brandy is an infallible medicine; and I fear the devotion some of our countrymen pay to it has been the means of spreading such a belief. One of my coolies was also taken ill. I administered a gentle dose to him, and soon, to his great astonishment, restored him to health. I

gained much repute in consequence, and found I was likely to get into good practice.

May 6th.—We again set forth towards the north, and passed over a steep mountain, well covered with trees of many descriptions. I have found every village situated between such high ranges of hills, that its inhabitants must be completely cut off from communication with their neighbours, of whom indeed they never seem to think. The population of Butolee is about forty souls, and whether the natives of such pigmy cities be happier or better than those of larger ones, I know not; they are more free, at any rate, from the sins of ambition, and cannot often suffer from the evils of war. They are perfectly ignorant of all that passes in the plains, and armies might shake the valley of the Dhoon without disturbing the quiet of Luck-warie, where we now are. Their's seems indeed to be the bliss of ignorance. After a long descent, in which we were very often forced to fight our way through wild roses that in full flower were growing across our path, we reached the banks of the Jumna. It was past twelve o'clock, and



the sun was scorching hot; the prospect of a ford, therefore, was not an unpleasant one. We chose a comparatively still spot between two rapids, to pass over; and when I had reached to nearly breast-high, I found the stream so strong I could not stem it. With some difficulty I returned, and recommenced in a more methodical manner; we entered the river twelve at a time, linked arm in arm, the coolies carrying their loads upon their heads, and we bearing our clothes in the same manner. My companions, in the affair of dressing, had much the advantage of me: they only carry a blanket, which they use at night; in the day they go naked. The river was about fifty yards wide; it was some time, therefore, before we had, baggage and all, safely transferred ourselves to the opposite side.

The consequence of our descent was the immediate necessity of climbing to a very high ridge, as bare as possible, and exposed to the full force of the sun. It was three hours before we were able to encamp at Luckwarie. It is a very neat village, built near the summit of a hill, at the base of which, and about one thousand

feet below it, flows the Jumna. It winds in a most irregular manner, and appears quite to insulate some of the mountains. At one time in our walk this morning it was foaming on every side of us. Luckwarie is the first place I have seen built of stone, and the houses are regularly constructed, having stairs within them, and being generally roofed with slate: some however are thatched, and where that is the case, the grass and laths are tied together with split bamboo, the ends of which reach nearly to the ground, with weights hanging from them—a simple mode of preventing the house from being unroofed by the violent gales of wind which so frequently occur. The village is remarkably clean, and all around well cultivated. The women are busy reaping, for that and drawing water seem to form their regular occupations. They are fair and good-looking, with small and strong but neat figures; their dress consists of a coarse linen petticoat drawn round the waist, with a little jacket, and abundance of rings from the nose to the toes. The manner of dressing the hair is most picturesque; they allow it to

grow very long, and add plaited wool to it, dyed red. When this tail reaches the ground, they weave a large tassel at the end of it; sometimes it hangs loose, and at others they twist it round the head, the tassel resting on the crown, when it serves the purpose of a turban.

In this village I have seen the prettiest women I have met with in the East; their charms, however, are not properly appreciated by the Himalaya gallants, one wife being the property of a family of brothers; four seems to be the mystical number, for all I have questioned on the subject answer, "We are four, and have one wife between us." This is a custom still common in other parts of the East; among some tribes on the Malabar coast, and in the kingdom of Kandy in Ceylon, it is generally practised. It is a usage, however, scarcely fit to be tolerated, and in the abolition of which I should think all parties concerned would be glad to join; but that all-powerful word, "Dustour," reconciles every thing in the East; it is the custom, and "bus," that is enough—is the usual reply to all objections to an existing habit. In

this village there is a temple, and the first we have met with; it is built of wood, and of similar shape to the pagodas of the plains. Its doors are covered with plates of brass, and the figures of Hindoo mythology about it are too well sculptured to be the work of the mountain artists. Some birds and beasts, however, hang in the porch like votive offerings, that are evidently the work of unpolished chissels. An old man with whom I was conversing seemed a little piqued at my laughing at the strange animal intended to represent an elephant, and declared that he thought it remarkably well cut for a man who had never seen one. I could not deny the justice of this remark.

My coolies thought that their hard labour entitled them to a more substantial meal than their usual one, and begged me to give them a goat. I consented, and they made an active search, but could not prevail on their owners to sell them one; they did not approve of my scruples, when I desired them not to insist upon it, and were anxious to force the villager to part with the one they had pitched upon. These

men, being natives of Sirmoor, and bordering on the plains, considered themselves far superior to the people of the mountain district in which we are.

May 7th.—This morning about nine o'clock we left the pretty village of Luckwarie, and passing over a higher ridge, arrived at Luxar; thence, mounting still, at another village called Dooarie. This is inhabited solely by brahmins, and it is from here that the Temple of Luckwarie is provided with its high-priest. The brahmins of the hills differ in no way from the people about them. They are neither distinguished by greater cleanliness, nor more scruples against what the Hindoo religion deems unclean or sinful; indeed, the distinction of castes seems to be unknown among them, or if known, never considered: they wear the sacred thread, and by that only are they discovered. In India generally the brahmins have a marked difference of appearance from every other class; indeed, the preservation of castes has made their present generations as distinct from one another as if they belonged to different nations. In the same

district of the mountains all men are alike. Idleness is the great privilege of the priest-order. They do not work themselves, but fag their women without much mercy; and at the period of harvest, hire from the adjoining villages as many servants as they may need. As no one in this village could read or write, I did not gain much information regarding their religious ceremonies. "Oh," said the brahmin I spoke to, "we have no particular manner of praying; we put some ghie on a fire, and go round it repeating some words till it is melted, and 'bus,' that's all."

We were not long at Dooarie, but still ascending, reached the village of Nonano. We passed a great number of fruit trees—figs and plantains, with plenty of white raspberries. I usually, on entering a village, make for the spring, which has ever been the signal for the women to come forth with their pitchers; and while my tent is erecting, I always find a shelter beneath the trees that overhang it. I learn a great deal of the village news, too. I found that we were the first white men—

"Sahib logué"—that Nonano had ever sheltered. We became objects of great curiosity, and finding that we were rather disposed to encourage it, we soon had a drawing-room (for ladies formed the principal part of our visitors) at the waters of Nonano. I asked a pretty woman, of about eighteen years of age, who had come out to present us with a bowl of raspberries, how many husbands she had. "*Only four,*" was the reply. "And all alive?" "Why not?" She questioned me in return, and asked where my country was. When I told her it was several months' journey from this, there was a general murmur of incredulity: "It is not possible," they all answered. "And where is your wife?" was the next inquiry. On my declaring I had none, an universal cry of "Bah, bah! Djoot, djoot!"—A lie, a lie!—showed how little they believed me. Where such beings as bachelors and spinsters after fourteen or fifteen years of age are unknown, no wonder they should receive with doubt such a declaration. I found it impossible to convince them of my veracity, and I fear I

lost a little in the estimation of my mountain friends, by asserting so palpable an absurdity as any man being without a wife appears to them.

A rapid torrent fell from the mountains a little to the left of the village, and near it I encamped. High hills so surrounded my position, that I found it very close during the day, and at night the thermometer was at 74°. I was an object of inexhaustible amusement and speculation to the children: they squatted round my tent like monkeys, and seemed to possess their power of mimicry to a high degree. We were frequently amused with the exhibition of our own peculiarities, none of which confounded them more than our manner of eating and dressing. The young population is not very great, but the likeness that prevails in a village from the singular intermixture that occurs from the mode of marriage is so strong, that it seems puzzling to discover the different children. The eldest brother is the father, "par excellence," of each family, and on his death, that office devolves on the next, and so on, till if all die in the course of nature, there can be no orphans.



Such an institution of marriage is for the purpose of keeping property as much in one family as possible, an equal division of it being the custom of inheritance; and where so much labour is necessary to cultivate the soil, and good soil so difficult to obtain, it seems important to prevent its being broken into portions so small as not to be able to afford food for their possessors. Their crops being the only subsistence of the mountaineers, and their land so limited, it was necessary, too, to devise a means of preventing an overgrown population. It is not surprising, therefore, that people who are still buried in the most hopeless darkness, should have fallen upon such a plan.

May 8th.—We ascended the mountain under which we were encamped last night, till in three hours we arrived at a little village called Buxaria. We did not see a tree or a bird in the walk. The sun was extremely hot, and the climbing very severe. We are amply rewarded, however, by our present situation. We have a magnificent view of the snowy range bearing to the eastward, and running nearly north and

south. The Peak of Jountghur, about one day's journey, lies to the N. E. between us and the snow, and about N. N. W. the Peak of Bairal stands within an hour's walk. On both these points, the Ghorkas, the natives of Nepaul, had fortresses. Their names are still heard with terror among these hills, and the people point with pleasure to the ruined holds of their tyranny, which may be traced on many commanding heights: their cruelties were as great as any other invasion on record can produce. Among these solitary glens—for every hour leads to scenes silent and terrible as Glenco—they had too much facility in executing them. Many villages that had been abandoned during their “reign of terror,” have not been replanted more than six or seven years. They have not yet, therefore, recovered from the visit of their warlike neighbours, who are as unlike the inhabitants of the northern Himalaya, as people occupying the most distant parts of the globe could be.

Behind the mountain on the south side, and many feet below it, winds the Jumna. There

are villages and terraces of corn all the way to its bank. Our position, and we have frequently happened to be similarly situated, is on the head of an inner circle of mountains, overtopped by higher ones, in their turn surrounded again, and so on *ad infinitum*. The slopes are enlivened by herds of cattle; and flocks of sheep browse in every place, and in every position. I think I have already said that the shepherds carry crooks, but this is the first time that I have heard the sound of the pipe. I hastened to the spot to see the instrument, and found a boy lying under the shadow of a tree, playing upon a reed: it was a double one, the vents not unlike those of a flageolet: the notes were sweet and simple, and, in such a situation, among such scenes, could not fail to bring to the mind an Arcadian picture.

May 9th.—Again we set forth, and making a steep descent to a narrow river, crossed and climbed up to Kathce, a small place most villainously situated in a cleft in the mountains, and surrounded by hills in a very close circle. The thermometer stood at ninety-eight degrees by day, and by night at eighty-two. The sudden

changes of temperature were occasionally very trying; as it happened sometimes in the course of a journey that we could not avoid halting in a valley, after having passed the previous day on the summit of the hill; in descending, for instance, from a temperature of forty-five to ninety degrees in the course of a few hours. I frequently set out in winter costume in the morning, and was glad to have a cold-bath and a linen jacket in the evening.

There was something very oppressive in the air of Kathee, and before I had been long there, I found that the natives experienced it as well as myself. I had many applications for advice and for medicine. Some told me that they had been suffering under their complaints for several years, and looked confidently to me for relief. I did all I could for those who applied to me, and when I had left my tent to roam about the hills with my gun in my hand, I thought I should have got rid of further importunity; but my appearance seemed to be the signal for the opening of Pandora's box; every person I met had some affliction to complain of. I endeavoured to sup-

port my fame by the prescriptions I gave; but at length, as a climax to my troubles, I was requested to attend a woman who was dangerously ill in the village. I declared I knew little of physic, but it would not do; I was carried to the invalid's house—another *médecin malgré lui*—in spite of all my excuses. I thought I might possibly shelter myself under the simple regimen of Sangrado, and was prepared to act accordingly. I was puzzled indeed when I found Dr. Slop would have been more required—I was called in as an accoucheur! My exit was as hasty as my progress had been slow; and I determined to limit my practice in future as much as humanity would permit.

These simple people have a most exalted idea of the talents of the “Sahib Logue,” and their faith in our medical knowledge was confirmed by what appeared to them little less than a miracle, during the passage of an officer of artillery last year through a mountain village; he was called to administer to an old man supposed to be dying. On visiting him, he found him suffering from a fever, stretched on a mat in a narrow low room,

or rather hole in his house; the people had all flocked into the place, as they invariably do on such an occasion, to witness the last struggle of their fellow-villager, for every one dies a public death among them, and were literally suffocating him; the "Sahib" turned them all away, and had the sick man carried into the open air. With a gentle dose, and the power of breathing, the patient soon recovered.

A native of Kathee, who chanced to be at the scene of such a wonder, related it to his astonished countrymen; and long, from the manner in which they told the tale to me, will the "conjunction dire" of this clever Englishman be remembered among them, and the greater marvel still, of his having refused to accept a present, for they assured me, the man who was thus cured had offered him "flocks and herds" to prove his gratitude.

May 10th.—We were too happy, on the appearance of day-light, to quit Kathee, and ascending the mountain to the north of it, by a steep and rugged path, we reached Chitar. We took from thence an easterly direction, having

the snowy range to bound our view. We did not long keep possession of so magnificent a prospect, but lost it in our passage through a thick and beautiful wood of pines, interspersed with the richest and most various fruit-trees. We seemed to have entered an enchanted garden, where the produce of Europe and Asia—indeed of every quarter of the world—was blended together. Apples, pears and pomegranates—plantains, figs and apricots—limes and citrons—walnut and mulberry trees, grew in the greatest quantity, and with the most luxurious hue. Blackberries and raspberries hung temptingly from the brows of the broken crags, while our path was strewed with strawberries. In every direction were blooming heather—violets and jasmine, with innumerable “rose trees in full bearing.” It was a most lovely day, and birds sang from every branch; the common dove, and the kokila—the nightingale of Hindoo poets—cooed around, and for the first time for many a year, I heard the notes of the blackbird!

The description of such a scene may tire the patience, as the enjoyment of it exhausted the

senses. As my desire, however, is not to give a scientific account of the phenomena of these regions, but to convey, as truly as I can, a picture of the most delightful scenery, and most lovely spots on the face of the earth, I hope I may be excused for now and then "babbling," a little too much perhaps, of "green fields." When from a distance we see only the cold and barren "range of eternal snow," we think of these hills with terror, and wonder how human beings can exist in so desolate a region; and while in our weary progress over trackless mountains, our thoughts engrossed alone by the awful grandeur of the scene, we fall, as it were by accident, into bowers where Armida might have bound Rinaldo for ever! it will be difficult to avoid running the risk of proving tedious to those who have no admiration for the pencil of nature. Even at such a hazard, I must still venture to paint.

Through the openings among the trees, we occasionally saw the Jumna winding at the foot of the mountain, sometimes disappearing suddenly, and again as suddenly breaking forth in



an opposite direction—terraces of corn stretching down to its banks. In every aspect, from little orchards of the choicest fruit,—each an epitome of the vegetable creation,—rose pretty villages of stone, roofed with slate. We reached one of them soon after parting from the beautiful wood I have described; Moolor was its name; it stood above a river that divided the hill (on which we determined to encamp) from it. We forded it immediately, and, after a distressing ascent, gained the place we are now in. Although it stands high, its situation is so much confined that it is extremely hot. The thermometer in my tent is now at ninety-four degrees. The people do not improve in appearance or manner as we advance; they have shown themselves averse to sell grain to us, an indispensable necessity, as it is the only food of my followers.

We stopped at one or two villages, where the natives assured us they had never seen Europeans before, and certainly evinced, by their curiosity and astonishment, the truth of their assertion. I overheard many remarks regarding our complexion that were not perfectly flattering; they

admired highly, however, a slight colour that the labour of climbing brought into our cheeks, and we became the objects of constant observation during our stay. The children, as usual, were very keen noticers of all our motions, and we were followed by the population of every village as we left it. Now my tent is surrounded by a wondering crowd, but I have become so used to be the "observed of all observers," that I bear my "blushing honours" with tolerable meekness.

In more civilized parts of the world, the same curiosity exists without the same excuse: and I remember once seeing the grave sheikh of a village in Upper Egypt, not very far from Carnac, whither I was then going from Kosier, more confounded by a pair of steel snuffers, than the simplest child in the mountains has been by any article that I have displayed to it. This worthy Arab took a boot-hook for a tooth-drawing instrument, and applying it to the teeth of nearly all the village, was quite disconcerted when he found none that it would fit. He clapped his hands with joy, however, when he saw his own bearded countenance reflected in the

snuffers, and telling me that he wanted a looking-glass to carry in his belt, begged me to give it to him.

May 12th.—Yesterday being Sunday, we did not proceed, but gave the inhabitants of Matraa full opportunity of surveying us in every action: the toilet seemed to be the most striking to them of all our oddities, and well it might, to those who know not what dressing or undressing means. This morning we moved, and after another high scramble, descended to the banks of a river, which ran rapidly over a bed of large stones, placed so unaccommodatingly, that we found much difficulty in fording. The water was deep in some parts, and about fifty feet wide. It was called the Coolna, but flows for a very little distance. It rises in the hills close to us, and is soon lost in the Jumna.

Siay, where we were glad to halt, after a laborious walk of five hours, stands upon the bank of the river. This village, which is built at the edge of a jungle, has not been long planted there. On some of the surrounding heights the Ghorkas had posts; and the vicinity of Siay to

the water, was too tempting to suffer it to remain unmolested. The people who survived the cruelty of their enemies, abandoned it, and have not long returned.

The natives of every part of the Himalaya through which we have yet passed, form the most striking exception to the general character of mountaineers that can be conceived; and to their neighbours in particular. They seem to be totally devoid of courage or of enterprise: the Ghorkas, on the contrary, possess both in an eminent degree. The men of these hills are stout and hardy, and frequently tall and handsomely formed; but indolent, and indifferent to every thing. The Nepaulese are short and ugly, but active and intelligent. The first give too much reason to the Hindoos of the plains for adopting into their vocabulary of contempt, the word Pariah, or mountaineer. The latter, were it not for the British, might chance one day to give a new construction to the term, and teach their neighbours of the flat country to respect the outcasts they now loathe.

As great a plague as the Ghorkas has got

possession of this valley—armies of the most tormenting insects ! It is impossible to guard against them ; and we were happy when day light gave us an opportunity of once more moving forward.

May 13th.—Soon after leaving our village, by the banks of the Coolna—determined never to place ourselves in a similar situation—we passed over the hills on which are the remains of the Ghorka fortresses, now merely heaps of stone. The natural position was too strong to render any work likely to last necessary ; so, soon after they were abandoned, they must have fallen to ruin.

Below the ridge, and above a stream, not much unlike Siay, stood Rampore. We hastened past it, and threading a thick jungle, soon forded the stream, and commenced another ascent. The face of the mountain we climbed was laid out in terraces ; and the corn was ripe, and the reapers were actively engaged upon it. It was a merry, as well as a busy scene ; for the women were singing with all their strength, and with as much sweetness as their “ native wood notes

wild" would permit, which is, to say truth, no great praise. I was anxious to learn the nature of their songs, but could not persuade any of them to repeat what, while they chaunted, no ear but their own could comprehend. They told me it was all about myself, too—each verse was an extempore compliment to the travellers, and the composition seemed to be highly approved; while occasional shouts of laughter showed that the mountain damsels were not devoid of humour. I observed that they did not tie their corn in sheaves, and leave it in the field; but the moment a woman had cut as much as she herself could carry, she bore it to the village, and placing it in a granary, returned to reap another load.

In a few hours we arrived at Cotha, pleasantly situated above the Jumna, and in the midst of a grove of mulberries, the fruit of which was ripe, and of exceedingly good flavour. Cotha is a place of great thoroughfare. It is the direct route from the plains, through Calsi, to Jumnoutri; and a track passes by it to Teok and Koteghur: the people are consequently more conversant with the manners of the flat country.

The village is very neat, and uncommonly clean; the crops are finer, and the cattle more numerous, than in any we have passed.

May 14th.—We were not able to remain longer in it, however, pretty and clean as it was; so at daylight we again bent our bodies to the task of climbing. We reached the summit of a high ridge in about two hours, and descended immediately to a village of brahmins, but we did not find that it was in the least better than any other belonging to that order that we had passed; indeed their places of abode are marked by the very reverse of what their sacred calling would lead you to suppose—cleanliness of every description being so much inculcated by the religion they should teach. Sterne says, by way of heightening his description of the monk's venerable appearance, in his *Sentimental Journey*, "Had I met him on the plains of Hindostan, I would have fallen at his feet and worshipped him." I have met many brahmins in the plains, who, if they did not command as much veneration, at least from their appearance merited the most perfect respect. The priests of

the hills, however, are as far beneath them as their country is above the sacred city of Benares; they have not kept their caste unmixed by lower ones, while the marked difference between the brahmins and the other castes of Hindostan generally show how strictly they have adhered to the enjoined division.

We continued our descent, and fording a narrow river, mounted again, and in a little more than an hour reached a hill that projected from a high rocky range, and hung over the Jumna, though several hundred feet above it. The river winds beneath like a dark blue snake. The country is peculiarly wild and bare; the only trees to be seen surround our tents, and the nearest water is a quarter of a mile off, dribbling so slowly that it takes half an hour to fill a pitcher. It is no wonder that the people of the next village, Meerounda, should be averse to our remaining; for this is the first place where we have met with any serious objection to supply us with food. They declared that they had no grain for themselves, and providing us was out of the question. It is too late, however,



to go further; and indeed there is every prospect that if we do, we shall fare worse, so I have determined to remain here, and have sent in pursuit of corn.

It is not surprising that the natives of such places should be averse to sell their grain, the only thing likely to be required from them. Their ground yields merely a sufficiency for their own use, and if it could produce more, their idleness would prevent their cultivating it. In the higher parts they are forced to grind it between two stones; below, where a stream runs, they can erect a mill. The inhabitants of mountain summits, therefore, have many disadvantages; they have but one harvest, while in some of the valleys there are two in the year. The land of the upper places is covered with stones, which they endeavour to pick off before the sowing season, which takes place immediately before the commencement of the rain. The fall is so heavy, however, that at its conclusion there are as many stones on the surface of the earth as if it had never been cleared; and through them the corn struggles in the best way

it can. Every village has a circle of stone at its entrance, with a low wall round it, for treading out the corn. Sometimes the bullocks are driven round unyoked, and always muzzled, but in rather a novel way ; a whisp of grass is twisted round their jaws, the tail of it frequently hanging in the most tantalizing manner over their noses.

These mountaineers have the same objection to part with any other of their possessions. They do not understand any thing of commerce, and care little about money. They make every thing they require themselves, and are dependent on no mart beyond the walls of their own villages : many do not even know the name of the second place from their own, and the most common answer to an inquiry for the name of such a range or such a peak is, " I have never heard ; " and if you observe that ignorance is strange among those who have lived all their lives under it, the reply is, " I am a mountaineer, how should I know ? " the worst apparently that could be given.

My resolution to have my people fed, I was

happy to find, overcame their scruples to sell, and a bazaar is at length established in my camp. I am obliged to fix the price to be paid for the corn at every fresh place I come; and I am not unfrequently much puzzled to please both the seller and buyer. To-day I have been disturbed by an unusual uproar upon the subject, an altercation having taken place between one of my coolies and a villager about the price of the meal; the first threw the quantum in dispute in the hillman's face, who immediately retorted; the skirmish became general forthwith, and when I ran out to pacify them, I found both sides whitened like faquirs, and the ground covered with flour.

I was long before I could make myself heard, but was forced to take a more active part in the fray than I intended, and not till I had seized the leading combatants, was I able to restore order. My judgment upon the subject so gratified the villagers of Meecoonda, that they could not resist praising my ingenuity, and would have thought me a "Justice Midas" at least, if they had ever heard of that worthy. I de-

cided that the meal should be left upon the ground for the coolies to make the most of, and its owners should be paid for the whole quantity they had brought to the camp. This pleased them so much, that they sat down at a little distance, watching, with great glee, the enemy endeavouring to scrape up sufficient to feed them.

As I had their wages in my own possession, I was easily able to enforce my sentence upon the coolies, and they seemed to enjoy the joke against themselves with the greatest good-humour. They are a very hardy, active race of men, and I never met any more willing to please. They only carry a blanket a piece, and the moment their day's labour is over, seek a convenient spot to cook their cakes and eat them in. They generally choose the shelter of an overhanging rock near which a rivulet runs, for such scenes constantly occur, and after their food, sit in a circle round a blazing fire, singing, till they fairly exhaust themselves to sleep.

May 15th — We have this day reached one of the fairy scenes I have already alluded to, and its beauties are more likely than most of the last

to lead me to describe them, on account of the sudden change from the barren rocks of Meeoonda to the fruit and flower of Lakkha Mundul. After passing through forests of magnificent pine-trees, varied by oak and rhododendron, we came suddenly upon the Jumna, where it makes a sweep round the base of a high-peaked mountain covered with wood to its summit; from its opposite bank rise gentler hills cultivated to their tops, and the corn quite ripe.

In a valley just large enough to contain it, and a little above the river, in a grove of fruit-trees, stands a pagoda; a cascade falls from the mountain of snow visible between two hills, the division of which leads to a fertile valley; its terraces are bounded by hedges, as neatly kept as they would be in England; a little higher than the temple stand a few huts inhabited by the brahmins who protect it. I have pitched my tent under the shadow of a large apricot tree, with raspberries and blackberries all around me. No more beautiful site for a solemn temple could be chosen; all that is grand and awful is mixed with every thing mild and soothing; and it

would not be difficult, nor I hope sinful, to sympathize with the feelings of the poor Hindoo, who rests awhile on his painful pilgrimage at this lovely spot, and learns that the temple was placed there by a god. The brahmins who reside near it declare that such was its origin, and the pilgrims are not likely to dispute the matter with them. It has altars to, and emblems of, all the gods, and has been considerably larger, for many ruins lie around, and throughout the neighbourhood are scattered images of every mythological description. At the entrance to the temple, on each side of the porch, is a bullock, couchant, of black marble, as large as life, and extremely well executed, as indeed are all the figures we met with. The brahmins assert that they are the descendants of the original priests of the place, and probably may be so: they have not, however, preserved their learning among them, for we found not one at Lakkha Mundul who could read.

May 16th, 17th.—I am afraid of saying too much about “lovely spots” and “magnificent pines,” so I shall hasten over this day’s journey

in description, as I should have been glad to have done in reality. After having got wet through, in fording rivers, I had an opportunity of growing dry again while toiling up the face of a rocky hill, with not a tree to shelter me from the sun, and not a blade of grass to soften the effect of its reflection from the white stone.

In a few hours, however, I reached Bunkoulee, and resolved to forget it: and this morning on our route to Tulli, we were amply rewarded for all our labour; when on reaching the summit of a rough and rugged mountain, looking perpendicularly to the Jumna below, we beheld the hills of Ghurdwall on our right, thickly wooded to their tops; the river at their base widening towards its source, and winding round meadows fenced with fruit-trees; sometimes it disappeared, and then extended in a different direction between banks of poplars, willows, and alders; till, lost altogether in the stupendous barrier of snow, which, in all its grandeur, with the beams of the morning sun upon it, bounded the view.

We begin to find our travelling the most

laborious and novel that can be imagined. After scrambling up the face of a rocky hill this morning, we were forced to slide down a polished surface of stone with not a place to rest the foot on, as well as the comfortable prospect of an uninterrupted fall of many feet, should we swerve in our course.

No description could convey an idea of the usual style of a day's journey over the Himalaya. Lines of irregular peaks towering one above the other, and in every relation possible to each other, oblige you to be constantly climbing up or sliding down. In every depth we find a roaring torrent to pass, and on every height an almost inaccessible rock to scale.

On arriving at Tulli, tired to death, I was surprised to observe, as I looked down upon the village from a hill above it, that all the people who had assembled to gaze upon us were jumping and skipping with the greatest activity, and in the most grotesque manner, striking their bodies on several parts, and performing such strange antics, that I conjectured it was a national dance got up in celebration of our arrival, not



supposing it likely that a stray sect of jumping dervishes could have established themselves in so out of the way a spot.

As I approached the village, however, I found that not only my servants, but my brother and myself, in spite of our fatigues, were unconsciously joining the dance, and striking ourselves in good earnest. I thought of the electric eels in some river in South America, and fancied a similar phenomenon hung over Tulli. The mystery was too soon cleared up; we had entered the precinct of the most venomous little insect I had ever met with: it is a miniature wasp, scarcely larger than a sand-fly, with a green body, and a pair of forceps that inflict its wounds unmercifully.

We have lost all chance of rest, and it is ludicrous in the highest degree to observe the effects of the bite upon the people. They break suddenly off, in whatever occupation they may be engaged, and after jumping and beating themselves for a few moments, resume their work, in which, however, they are soon interrupted for further exercise. They are covered

over with black spots, in which I am bidding fair to rival them, for these little insects never fail to leave their marks. We are situate on the slope of a hill surrounded on all sides by pine-trees, and I imagine that that circumstance may be the cause of so many insects, for the heat is not particularly great; the thermometer stands at seventy-four degrees.

May 18th.—We were absolutely driven from Tulli by the “plagues” of the place—our feet and legs so swollen we found it difficult to walk. My servants presented the most miserable figures. I was obliged to divide my trowsers among them, although they did not seem to benefit much by the additional covering. I was afraid I should have had a fever in my camp, too, for they seemed so wounded and tormented that I anticipated great trouble; their spirits were fast declining, and their bodies sadly emaciated. Every day they implored me to tell them how much further I was going, but I found secrecy most essential: the only plan was to place them in the predicament of Macbeth—

“For I am in blood advanced so far,  
That to go on is easier than return.”

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Our day's labour, too, was greater than ever. The forest of pines through which we passed was so slippery from the fallen leaves, that we were constantly on the ground, or rather the hard rock. So even and flat was the surface, that it appeared to have been carefully paved for the convenience of sliding down. No book on gymnastics ever yet penned will teach the right use of the limbs so well as a few hours' journey in the midst of these mountains: there is not a part of the body that does not occasionally come into use, and in a manner, too, not likely to occur even to Captain Elias himself.

We passed a river—the Gudnoo was its name—by a bridge that is very common, though not very agreeable nor safe. It is narrow, and made of twigs, well twisted together: it rests generally on a stone, on each bank of the stream; and when none large enough are to be found for the purpose, then a pile of loose stones serves for its support. A few are laid carelessly upon each end of the bridge, to prevent its tilting up; and while the water foams beneath, you are reminded, in your passage across, by the falling pebbles of the foundation announcing, every fresh footstep

you take, that there is every probability of your trying the force of the torrent.

From the Gudboo, we soon reached the Jumna, running rapidly over a rocky bed, its banks beautifully wooded. On a pleasant meadow, not far from a village named Bugassa, we ordered our tents to be pitched. We were tempted, by the river, to remain here, but have found it dreadfully hot. The thermometer, at noon, was at 92°. The sky has become suddenly overcast, however, and threatens a storm.

May 19th.—In the afternoon of yesterday, and this morning, I tried the temperature of the water. The thermometer fell seven degrees each time—from 63° to 56°, and from 59° to 52°. It rained very heavily all night, and obliged us to remain several hours after sunrise, that our tents might dry. When able to proceed, we continued by the banks of the river, over a comparatively flat road, till we reached Sonalee, and then encamped on the Jumna.

We are now placed opposite a strange-looking village, named Burkotee, perched upon the summit of a high rock, overhanging the stream.

It seems unconnected with the mountains about it, as if torn from them by some convulsion of nature. Behind it rises a wood; and, below, the Jumna flows round several islands; and among the tall trees of some of them, browse many deer—they form, in fact, many miniature parks, and I regret that such beautiful scenes could not be removed to a country where they could be more frequently visited. The Rajah of Tirhee has a palace here, indeed; but such a palace, and such a Rajah, are sadly out of character with the sublime and lovely prospects, he, and some hundreds as ignorant as himself, alone are doomed to contemplate.

I have beheld nearly all the celebrated scenery of Europe, which poets and painters have immortalized, and of which all the tourists in the world are enamoured; but I have seen it surpassed in these unfrequented and almost unknown regions. The youth who, just emerged from college, gazes for the first time on Mont Blanc, may appreciate my feelings when I enjoy the glories of the Himalaya. Although I have seen the Alps—although I have witnessed the sun rise from the

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he, taking me on one side with an air of mystery. This is no uncommon thing, by-the-by, for as if ashamed of trade, they conceal the smallest articles under their cloaks, and even a pot of honey is displayed with as much caution as a smuggling pedlar shows his contraband ware—"I have something to sell," said he; "and as I am a poor man, I hope you will buy—very cheap—a little girl, so big," measuring about four feet from the ground, "and only eighty rupees. She is my daughter, and my only child." "What!" interrupted I, "sell the only child you have?" "I must live," was his laconic answer, given with the most perfect *sang froid*. "She is the prettiest girl in the village," continued he, urging the bargain, "and as I cannot afford to have her married, I must sell her." He said in excuse, that it was the custom, for they had more women in their villages than they knew what to do with—certainly more than they seemed to care about.

My servants have tried to buy a lamb, while many are frisking about, but the villagers refuse to part with them. "The sheep give us cloth-

ing," say they. "And the women, I suppose, wear it out?" said I, "Sach bat"—very true, was the reply.

The fair sex is indeed but little appreciated, or probably I should say, too much esteemed, for each has four husbands at her beck, although the gallant that submits to a quarter of a heart can scarcely value the possession. No wonder, however, they should have a superfluity of women; yet I cannot think that the cost of maintaining them can be very burthensome, for I notice that after they prepare the food for their lords they sit quietly on one side till their husbands' appetites are appeased, and then receive the remains, which come to them sometimes fearfully reduced. Their clothes, too, are the most whimsical contrivances—too light indeed for comfort—they are scarcely enough for decency. They seem to wear them till they literally drop from them, never washed and never mended: they are most completely things of "shreds and patches." We should be puzzled to know how they could get into them, were it not evident that they never get out of them:

they hang about in such singular tangles and eccentric festoons, that it would seem a more simple process, as well as a more modest arrangement, to convert a net into a cloak or petticoat. A sultan of the East once censured his daughter for being indelicately dressed: she was covered from head to foot with forty folds of Dacca muslin. What would he have said had his empire extended to Rewaen?

To conclude my story of the father, I found that he had kept his daughter in reserve at a short distance from the seat of conference, and on finding his persuasions not so powerful as he anticipated, suddenly, to overwhelm me at once with the "stage effect," brought her blushing to my presence. With the best grace I could, I begged her to excuse me, and praying that she might find many mountain youths in her own village more calculated to make her happy, bade farewell to the merchant, who would barter his blood for gold, and the lady, who, to say truth, seemed so little struck by the interview, that she went smiling away, "nor cast one lingering look behind."

May 20th.—While in the valley of the Jumna we have been visited by heavy rain every night, and from the additional weight given by the wet to our tents we are forced to lose the cool air of the morning, and make our journey after the sun has been long enough up to dry the saturated canvass. In the narrow vales to which our route is now confined, we are too glad to escape from the rays of a noonday sun to be induced, even by the fresh beauties that present themselves at every step, to pursue our walk for more than seven or eight miles.

We sauntered by the banks of the river till we reached a wooden bridge, the substantial construction of which surprised us a great deal : it was the first effort of the Rajah of Triha, and seemed to be, as indeed it merited, a subject of pride to his highness's people. Frames of wood placed one above the other, with stones between them, each overlapping from the lowest, till the upper extended a third of the way across, these buttresses formed the supports upon which the bridge rested, that was made of three thin planks but indifferently fastened together, having

a railing on each side of nearly four feet high to protect the passengers. The planks were thin, and their action so great as to send you springing over with the utmost elasticity. It is now new and perfectly safe, but when time, the destroyer, has laid his fangs upon it, unless his highness be public-spirited enough to erect another, I foresee the fall of many a weary pilgrim, who perhaps may deem himself favoured in meeting with such a fate.

We have pitched our tents in a grove of fir-trees at the foot of a mountain, and close to the water's edge, for the valley has now narrowed to a glen, closed by the snows of Bunder Poch, which rise like a marble pillar to bound the scene. The village of Nanguan stands on the opposite shore, and the mountain behind divides the Jumna from the Ganges, and its summit commands a view of both : they are only eight miles asunder, and happy is the Hindoo who gazes on each from that elevated position. The village of Cunda stands near the highest point, and gives its name to the mountain, at the foot of which rises a spring of clear water, the source

choked up with lilies. The Hindoos imagine it to be the sacred river itself, that flows under the hill to this point, and we found two brahmins bathing and praying in it, under that happy delusion—for happy it certainly is to the pilgrim whose strength will not permit him to traverse the hill for that praiseworthy purpose.

Nanguan was blessed in the golden age by being the residence of a most devout man—a notorious saint—whose name it is scarcely worth remembering. Every day of his life he was in the habit, after having performed his ablutions in the Jumna, of traversing the steep mountain, to repeat his devotions in the Ganges or Bhagirathi. As at length he grew old, as even Hindoo saints will do, he found that although his faith continued unflinching, his limbs could scarcely bear him over the accustomed ground. One scorching day, so the story goes, he had just strength sufficient to bring him to the spot where this holy pool now is. He threw himself on the ground, and said with a sigh, “Alas! that the Ganges should be so far off. O that it could come to me, for I fear I never shall see

its sacred stream again!" Immediately, to reward such long and exemplary service, this water pilgrim, though far different the cause, it performed its subterranean journey like another Alpheus, rushed from under the mountain, like the saint, no doubt, averse to pass over it, and addressing the old man, told him that his prayers and ablutions would be as efficacious when performed here as in the highest of the five Prayags; and that he would continue to flow, for his sake, to benefit future generations.

My followers, two of whom came from the province of Orissa, and not very far from Jugger-naut, were evidently unprepared for such a miracle, but their faith on its discovery was worthy of the most self-torturing Yogee. They forgot their sorrows and their sufferings in their delight at meeting the adored Ganges, and bathed, and prayed, and drank, till they were fairly exhausted; and although we were not to quit the neighbourhood of the Jumna for several days, they carried bottles of the water with them, declaring that no river or spring in the world could produce such a draught. Whether it be

sacred or not, however, I must add my testimony in its favour—it was the most cool and delicious water I ever tasted.

In this holy spot—for what is so pure that it has not some alloy!—we have been assailed by the furious little insects I have already mentioned, with even greater virulence than at Tulli. The villagers have persuaded my servants, who are positively wasting away with their tortures, to plaster themselves over with turpentine and honey, and they have adopted the prescription with such zeal, that they appear perfectly coated with the unsavoury compound. I am obliged to bear it with all the firmness I can collect, and have this consolation, that if we lose ourselves in the mountains, we shall be easily scented to our lair.

The corn is ripe around us, and the reapers are making their harvest. They are frequently obliged to throw down the sickle, while they dance about in agony from the stings of their indefatigable tormentors. The legs of the women are bare, while the men wear pantaloons; but both sexes have a large cloth folded round their faces, merely leaving room for the



eyes to peep through. They expose as little of the person as possible while working in the fields, for there the insects are most numerous; yet, with every precaution, they find it impossible to escape. As for myself, I am nearly mad with the torment; though clothed from head to foot, I cannot rest a moment. The misery of a first landing in Calcutta, in the height of the summer, with all the bloom of youth about you, with no curtains—I talk of the army only—and a hard couch in a barrack-room in Fort William, where the hum of the musquitoes is more appalling than the roaring of the tiger, is luxury compared with the sufferings of those who pause at Tulli and its neighbouring woods.

May 21st.—At daylight we left the miraculous pool, and soon commenced the ascent to Cootnoor, which in less than four hours we reached, having climbed up a steep and rugged hill. It is a neat and clean village, placed in a little vale above the Jumna, enclosed by mountains, and so closely bounded by them, that its inhabitants need not know there is a world beyond, for they can scarcely get to it.

The valley is animated and gay ; the women are reaping and the men ploughing ; for the plough follows the sickle immediately, and the sower the plough ; and at this moment all these occupations are busily carried on.

The people have a less picturesque appearance than in the first ranges of the hills ; the men and women are dressed nearly alike, and always in a dark grey mixture ; the latter do not wear the long plaited tail of hair, but cut it close, and cover it with a dirty cloth—for I never yet have had the good fortune to meet with a clean one ; a frock reaching down to the knees, and open at the bosom is their only garment ; its sleeves are long, with a cut on the inside just below the shoulder, through which they thrust their arms when they work, the sleeve hanging loosely behind ; a rope forms the girdle, into which they stick a curved knife, which answers for cutting any thing—wood, or corn, or the throat of a goat. The men are attired exactly in the same manner, with the addition of a pair of pantaloons. In the villages above this, their clothes are principally made ; my guide of this

morning begged me to give him a great deal of money, as he termed it, to buy his wife a dress. He said that he must bring her one: for if he returned without it, she had threatened to run away and live with some swain who would be more attentive to her wardrobe. He smiled when he told us his dilemma, and did not seem very much appalled at the prospect of the elopement. It would be a pity that such a holy tie should be dissolved for want of a petticoat, and we did all we could towards strengthening the knot.

We met with a great many black partridges; and although the labour was severe, we were fortunate enough to give a few to our larder. I do not talk very like a sportsman, but every miss was a more serious matter than the mortification of a bad shot. Our sheep had become skeletons, and our poultry were all dead. I was almost obliged to seize from the natives what I wanted to buy, and force the money into their hands. a few brace of partridges, therefore, as far as possible were no mean addition to the table. We halted a day for the purpose of en-

joying the sport again, and all the men and boys in the village assembled to beat the woods for us. To them it was the finest sport in the world, and the fall of a bird was hailed with a shout that made the mountains echo.

May 23rd.—We have found ourselves so completely among wild and nearly impracticable passes to-day, that it is very obvious the source of the Jumna is not far from us. We have four arduous journeys yet in prospect, however, and all, I am assured, worse than the scramble of this morning. After crossing the Jumna by one of the wicker bridges, we climbed up a hill by a path of loose stone, the river foaming a little below us. It is exceedingly rapid, and its rise very perceptible; it dashes over large rocks with a tremendous noise, making a fall sometimes of several feet; and close to where we are encamped is a beautiful cascade of at least ten yards in height. The space which we occupy is bounded on one side by a thick jungle, and on every other by high mountains. Khonsala was nearly the most distant spot to which the Ghorkas reached.

An action was fought on the plain we are in, though I fancy, from the different nature of the combatants, not a very desperate one; and near it are still the remains of a fortress. For the first time for many days we have escaped the stinging insects; and we find it so much cooler, although still on the banks of the river, that our ascent must be as great as it has been sudden. Yesterday the thermometer at noon was  $82^{\circ}$ ; to-day, in a much more confined situation, it is  $76^{\circ}$ .

May 24th.—It is very fortunate, that as our labours increase, so do our spirits. The prospect of gaining the source of a river must ever be an exciting one, and throughout my life I have felt a sort of veneration for the fountains that give birth to them. It would be vain to endeavour to paint my feelings on seeing the Jumna now narrowing into a little streamlet, that a few months before I had admired sweeping past the cities of Delhi, of Agra, and of Allahabad! I am not surprised that the simple superstition of the Hindoo should give to it a sacred character, and deem it a meritorious pilgrimage, when I remember how a prouder nation toils over de-

serts to worship at a human shrine, and a Christian country place implicit faith in the efficacy of a journey to our "Lady of Loretto."

After quitting Khonsala we crossed over a high stony mountain, covered with a thick wood. We descended occasionally to pass over the Jumna, and then proceeded by its banks: it rises most apparently, and grows always more rapid and more noisy. We passed a village named Rana, an extremely neat one; the houses of stone, roofed with shingles; and about a mile further finished our day's journey at Barree. This also is a neat place, and the great difference in the state of the crops gives a proof of the sudden ascent from our last day's resting place. In Khonsala the corn was cut, and here it is quite green. The faces of the hills are covered with a quantity of red spinach, (chuar,) which gives a pretty as well as singular appearance to the mountains. We found also some potatoes; they were small, but of good flavour. Some natives had learned the use of this vegetable in Simla, bordering on the plains, and had endeavoured to cultivate it here. It was a happy day to my poor servants,

who had been long without vegetables, and the chuar was soon thinned by them, while we assisted in consuming the potatoes.

At Rana and this village a great deal of cloth is made. The women are not employed in this work, and every man makes for himself as much as his own sheep will give him, in the simplest way, in front of his own door. A villager never moves without his distaff, and a little basket on his arm, which contains his wool; and as he walks along, he spins his thread: even when carrying loads they are thus accompanied, and appear in consequence never to be idle. It is strange to meet, in these wild passes, with men, each sturdy enough to make a Hercules, armed with a distaff and a work-basket. We find the thermometer reduced at noon to 66°, the weather still continuing remarkably fine.

May 25th.—We passed a stream this morning that runs into the Jumna, and falls from a neighbouring mountain, and soon after fording it, ascended a high hill, by what I might call a ladder of stone; it was a severe struggle, and led through a wood of pines, with a great quan-

tity of rhododendron in flower. We again crossed the Jumna where it is very rapid, indeed where it may be termed a cataract, by a ricker bridge. We had to scramble up a slippery rock and slide down again before we reached the bridge, and to repeat the same process after having passed it. The natives invariably erect their bridges over a torrent, where a fall would ensure destruction; for this reason, that they can only in such parts get sufficient clear space from side to side. It behoves the traveller to have steady nerves who crosses these torrents, almost "by the unsteady footing of a spear," for the bridges are sometimes scarcely much better.

We have snow to day before and behind us; that before is perpetual, the other will melt, but is now very thick. We frequently pass, in our daily journeys, torrents of water rushing through clefts in the rocks or mountains in great force to feed the Jumna. At Khonsala the thermometer fell thirteen degrees below the temperature of the air in the bed of the river, from 64 to 51°.



We are encamped to day on the banks of the river, and below a village called Bunassa. The river spreads a great deal in this spot, and is not therefore so rapid. The scenery around is of the wildest description. A sort of basin is formed between two mountains, about a hundred yards behind my tent, and from a cleft in one of them, from a height of eighty feet, falls a tremendous body of water without any thing to break it; the river which it forms runs with great rapidity into the Jumna. Thousands of pigeons build their nests in the rocks around.

This is the most magnificent spot imaginable: were it placed in any kingdom of Europe, what crowds would flock to see it! From the base of the opposite mountain flows a stream of hot water which mixes with the little river; the quantity is small, but the heat of it is very great; I could not keep my hand in it a moment. It has nothing particular in the taste, but I observe that it has discoloured the stones, changing them from white to a deep yellow. The Hindoos worship in this spot; and certainly, to keep the hand or foot any time immersed in

it, would be a very satisfactory trial of fortitude and faith. The thermometer stood at  $144^{\circ}$  when placed in the nearest part of the hot spring to its issue from the rock.

As unicorns have been supposed, if they really do exist, to have their habitations among these hills, either on the Indian side or on the opposite one, we could not be indifferent to the circumstance, nor cold about the possibility of gaining a peep at such an extraordinary phenomenon. Whenever we found intelligent people we questioned them minutely upon the probability of such a piece of good fortune, but nothing satisfactory were we able to elicit from our inquiries. At length, at this place we met a villager whose replies to our cross-examination gave so much hopes, that we felt quite elated at the prospect of beholding the long-looked-for animal. "A big beast," said he, "quite mad with wickedness, comes very often at night out of the woods, and rushing into the fields, tears up the grain, and roars in such a manner, that he makes us all tremble." "Has he horns?" we both exclaimed, "A tremendous one!" was the reply. "One

only?" "Only one," continued the man, quite delighted with the interest we seemed to take in his narrative, "and that, O! a terrible one;" stretching out his arms to show the length of it. He is sure to come into such a field before midnight. We resolved to watch for him, and engaged our informant to keep us company.

It was a fine rainy night, and the wind was howling through the woods in a manner fearful enough to have tempted the heroine of a romance abroad. Before nine o'clock we were at our posts, and planting ourselves beneath an overhanging crag of great height and wildness, within sight of the destined arena, and within sound of a mighty cataract, we sat with our guns by our sides, and a couple of flasks to fortify us against the cold and the rain, like bandits waiting for their prey. It was just light enough to give double size to every object, and the waving of the trees never failed to make us startle, while the crackling of the branches that yielded to the storm, threw us into the most feverish excitement. "How shall we secure the animal? or if we kill him, how get him stuffed and

bear his bones to England?" were the questions we continually asked each other; then, like the milk-maid in the fable, revelled in the fields of fancy, till quite lost in speculation upon the advantages that would attend so glorious a discovery.

Midnight at length arrived, and our patience was not exhausted: still the wind and the rain continued. At length, just a little before daylight, we heard a heavy racing above us; for the rock beneath which we were sitting projected from an abutment, as it were, to a wide terrace. We rose in agony almost, from expectation; and stood ready to confront the monster, that through our endeavours was no longer to live in fable alone! It was pitch dark and blowing a hurricane; the underwood above us was crackling before the pressure of some large animal, which evidently approached us. With our eyes rivetted upon the brow of the crag we had been sitting under, we stood, with cocked guns and beating hearts, when—"Ho!"—a loud cry from our native companion—"there he goes!"

was followed by a heavy sound, as of the spring of a horse—and there he went, most assuredly, without even giving us the gratification that the traveller received from the disappearance of the “Stout Gentleman,” after having, like him, passed a night of restless curiosity. The hill-man had seen little more than ourselves, and could not say whether it was the very beast we were in wait for, or some other less formidable and less desirable. I have no doubt myself that it was one of the large elks, (the moir of these mountains,) of which we had already seen several. they are magnificent creatures, and so big, that they appear, when rushing across your path, fully as terrible as an unicorn itself could—very timid, however, like other wild deer, they turn round and gaze on you, in fear and trembling, the moment they have passed. It seemed too wanton to shoot so beautiful an animal; so, although we had many opportunities, we preferred admiring them from a little distance, to gaining a nearer examination at the expense of their lives.

Such gigantic inhabitants are proper to so tre-

mendous a region ; and it is difficult to describe the grand effect of meeting with them in the glorious woods they inhabit.

Not over well-pleased with our night's entertainment, we returned, wet and fatigued, to our tents ; and, I think, a little ashamed at some cockney simplicity that may be detected in our adventure, if it deserve that name. The mountaineer who had been the cause and partaker of it, was very well pleased with a small reward for his assistance ; and, although marvelling much at the whim of our proceedings, as I guessed from the manner in which he related it to his brother-villagers, would have had no objection to share in such nocturnal amusement very frequently. His companions were assembled round him, near our tent, and every now and then, in the midst of his narration, looked up to us with unfeigned astonishment. "What does it all mean?" was written plainly in every eye ; and we gained much, in their estimation, by the mystery in which our doings were wrapped.

## CHAPTER IX.

*Cursali—Mr. Finzer and the Brahmin—Pilgrimage to Jamboutri—Goitre—Departure for Guogoutri—Finger-posts—Dogs—Hall of the Seasons—Mountain road-makers—Their Cattle—Their Religion—Magnificent View from the summit of a Mountain—Stinging Insects—Natives smoking.*

MAY 26th —We are now at Cursali, the first human habitation past which the Jumna flows. It is situated in a delightful and extensive valley, and our camp is pitched among apricot trees. Yesterday, at Banassa, it rained almost all day long, and we found it the coldest place we had been in. By day the thermometer varied from 50° to 60°, and at night it fell below 50°. With such a climate, we had an agreeable walk to this "Ultima Thule:" here we are more confined, and it is considerably warmer. The vale is sur-

rounded by mountains covered with snow. Bunderpuch and Dootie, where the Jumna rises, bound it on the north; and on the south, east, and west, are peaks of snow. I write this by moonlight, on the brightest and most lovely night poet could imagine. If I were to attempt to paint the scene, I should run the risk of soon being lost in "King Cambyses' vein." Let any one imagine the most beautiful garden in his recollection, and surround it, in his fancy, with every variety of hill, covered with every variety of tree; encircle the whole with the highest and whitest of the Alps; and let a river, bounding over rocks, run through it: let him choose the night of a full moon, and go and sit in the midst of this garden—alone—not a sound but the roaring of the water—no sight but heaven above, and the small space which he only seems to inhabit—the snow that encompasses it polished like pearl in the moonbeams—then, if he arise and give no better description of it than I have ventured to do, he will, perhaps, like me, pronounce it indescribable.

To-morrow we ascend to Jumnoutri, and I





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shoot some, one of which nearly placed me *hors de combat*. I had started a bird from some distance; and as it flew heavily, I thought I should intercept it, by posting myself on a projecting crag. With great difficulty I gained the position; and resting my foot on the stump of a tree, stood ready for a shot. The pheasant, as I guessed, alighted above me; and, on turning round, my rest gave way, and down I rolled, dragging the man who attended me in my fall. The bird, astonished, as well he might have been, ran to the point of the crag, to ascertain what, "of all the birds in the air," could have made so sudden an apparition. It was a fatal curiosity; for the gun went off, and depositing some grains of shot in the hillman's leg, who was rolling after me, sealed the doom of the poor pheasant. It was a lucky accident, too, for me; for the man, who was close above me at the time, had just contrived to stop himself; and catching, suddenly at the muzzle of the gun, on feeling the shot, stayed me also in my course. He was not much hurt; and, on bearing the prize into the camp, in relating the story, seemed to forget his

accident entirely, and, I doubt not, gave me a first-rate character for a "flying shot."

I soon discovered that our fare would be precarious indeed, if we trusted to pheasants and partridges:—we had met with two descriptions of both—the monal and the horned pheasant, as well as the black and red-legged partridge:—so, in despair, attacked the harmless pigeons that cooed about the trees under which we were: it was too much like the caricatures of West India planter shooting; but we were not displeased at being able to transfer many of them to pies, such commodities becoming highly necessary. "Nothing for dinner to-day, sir," was the frequent commencement of my *maitre d'hotel's* application for advice upon his culinary proceedings. "Follow me!" was the well-known answer; and in very little more than an hour, the pigeons, then fluttering about the cliffs, were brought roasted to my table.

May 27th. — About seven o'clock this morning we commenced our pilgrimage to the source of the Jumna, which lies nearly north from Cursala. We were followed by every male in the

village, with many faquirs, who had arrived in time to take advantage of the brahmin's attendance upon us. Our own train of sixty or seventy, joined to the number, made no inconsiderable addition. Behold us, then, setting forth, the brahmin in front, and the coolies, for the first time without their loads, "right glad to miss" the lumbering of the tents, playing like children behind us. Curiosity and devotion seemed to form the inducements of the party—which predominated I will not say; they both had an opportunity of being amply gratified. Our road, if I may so call it, was indeed a proper climax to our performances hitherto: we crossed the river nearly a dozen times, so great were its windings, sometimes by wading through it—and bitterly cold it was—and occasionally by trunks of trees with flat stones laid upon them serving for bridges.

Our first scramble was up a "hill perpendicular," which was not long in presenting itself to our notice. A great part of it was effected upon hands and knees, and by taking advantage of steps formed by the accidental protrusion

through the earth of the roots of trees and the sharp points of stones. On reaching its summit we found it was deemed the outer barrier to the sacred spot, and a small altar was erected upon it. It was indifferently arranged of loose stone, and a few miserably carved gods were deposited within it, to whom each Hindoo made his obeisance. We were glad of the opportunity of gaining breath that an even space around afforded; and so exhausted was every one with the scramble, that half an hour had elapsed before the heavy panting of the party subsided. The fakirs plucked the flowers from the surrounding rhododendron, and laying them with a salaam upon the altar, prepared to set forth once more.

We descended the other side of this hill by similar steps to those we had ascended by; and, when about thirty feet from the bed of the river, we found a novel bath in the trunk of a tree with notches in it. It was most advantageously situated for a shower-bath, being immediately under a waterfall, which poured in cooling streams upon us. We climbed up rocks

by the same ingenious contrivance, over which we had much difficulty in walking, and similar plans brought us to the bottom of them again. In many parts the snow was very thick; and, stretching across the river, formed marble arches for it to flow under. By these beautiful bridges we frequently passed, and found no little amusement in the sliding and tumbling they gave rise to. The astonishment of my Bengal servants, who had never seen snow but on the high peaks many thousand feet above them, was beyond all description when they first placed their feet upon it.

The channel of the river is the grandest possible, but from its being so narrow, and the mountains that form it so high, we could see but little of the snowy range. An occasional peep of Dootie to the south, a little of Bunderpuch, whence the Jumna flows, was all of that tremendous line that we were able to obtain sight of. Many streams fall from the hills around, and one in particular, from a peak on the left bank, called Dummer Kunter, runs over the face of a nearly perpendicular rock, from a height of full two hundred feet.

At length we reached the summit of our labours ; we had tracked the river to its covert, and lost all further trace of it, as well as power of proceeding, by the snow that choked the way. Here then we at last stood on the threshold of eternal snow ! We had come unto "that bourne whence no traveller returns ;" where nature has written for ever with a death-cold hand, "thus far shalt thou go, and no further !" It is not often that man has an opportunity of reaching the very verge of human power, and on such an event I hope I may be pardoned for displaying some exultation. The consciousness of having endured a little to accomplish it may heighten the feeling ; and although I have to boast that in common with several, I must feel proud, as I have no doubt they did, at having gained the source of the Jumna.

The first and greatest object of curiosity, both to the pilgrim and the traveller, is the hot spring. It rushes through an aperture in the rock of about four inches in circumference, with very great force and heat. In the vent the thermometer stood at 180° : about a foot further, and where the water bubbled from the ground,

and was a little more exposed to the air, the temperature was 160°. There is a constant smoke rising to a considerable height. So wonderful a phenomenon as boiling water on the edge of perpetual snow, was very likely to attract the devotion of the Hindoos. They dip their hands in it, and perform the necessary prayers and evolutions about it, and make offerings of money, the perquisite of the brahmin, if they can afford it. I propitiated the divinity of the spring in the most orthodox manner, and had soon an opportunity of seeing it transferred to the custody of the high-priest.

Close to the bed of the Jumna, and a few feet from where it first appears from beneath the snow, another small stream of hot water issues from the rock, and, mixing with the river, makes a delightful tepid bath, in which the devout never fail to indulge. During their ablutions the officiating brahmin mutters prayers for their salvation, and congratulations for their having reached so holy a spot. I joined in the bathing, and was included in the prayer. The water was exceedingly cold, for I first jumped



into the river itself ; it was about four feet deep, and running with the utmost rapidity. I thought I had been divided in two when I made my first plunge, and was not long in hastening to the warm-bath. So great an advantage as this happy mixture, is attributed, like the miracle of the well near Nanguan, to the efficacy of the piety of some saint, and I verily believe the same one for whom the Ganges took so eccentric a course. He was very zealous in performing his ablutions in all the most sacred rivers and fountains among the hills, and had frequently to complain of their intense cold as he had of the height of Cundla, when the Bhagirathi rose at its base to indulge him. The presiding deity of one part of these icy waters, in consideration of his infirmities, and in reward of his faith, gave him the power of causing a hot spring to flow from whatever rock he happened to lean against, when about to perform his holy rites. Although he seems to have used the gift sparingly, he has exercised it judiciously, for it is a singular feature in these phenomena, that where they do occur, they are hottest in the coldest and most elevated

situations. Thus between the springs of Banassa and Jumnoutri there is a difference in the temperature of 40 degrees; the former being considerably lower in its position as well as in its warmth. I tasted the water, but could discern no particular flavour in it; and I regret very much that a bottle I was having carried up for the purpose of bringing some away, suffered in the scrambling journey, and I am consequently prevented from submitting it to be analyzed; though, in so doing, I should do nothing more than what I believe has been already done. In the bed of the river the mercury sank to  $37^{\circ}$ ; in the air, and placed against a rock exposed to the sun, it stood at  $62^{\circ}$ .

It was some time before all the party were prepared to descend from these devout regions, to undergo the fatigue of a return, which, alas! proved much more severe than the ascent; the perpetual sliding down the snowy bridges we had before crawled up, with every other difficulty reversed, by no means made more simple by the repetition; and, indeed, what can be ren-

dered easier by reading it backwards?—proved that it is necessary for a traveller to these mysterious spots to be as perfectly master of equilibrium as a rope-dancer, to be able to poize himself with skill on the point of a stone on one foot, while the other must be ready to spring to the root of a tree, round the trunk of which he must cling like a monkey, lest an unfortunate tremor should plunge him headlong into some yawning gulph. He should be endowed with the activity of a kangaroo and the adhesion of a lizard; occasionally tripping over frail and tottering bridges with the lightness of Camilla, and then steadying himself upon his staff with the weight of Hercules!

In these regions every thing that is imposing and magnificent is united with the simplest objects; while we gaze with wonder at the stupendous crags around, we roam over beds of pale blue violets; and strawberries in blossom, thick as daisies on an English meadow, cover every spot of grass we meet with.

It was evening before we reached Cursah

again, and we are lucky in having as lovely a night as the last. During the past three or four days I have observed the swelling of the throat, (the goitre,) so common to all elevated positions, very general in the higher part of these hills. I do not think I have seen a man or woman without some little of it since I left Khunsala, and in many it is much larger than I ever remember observing it in the Alps. I do not know whether the possessors of it consider it a beauty, but the women decorate themselves with as great a variety of necklaces as in any other part of the East, and seem at any rate perfectly unconscious of any striking defect. They attribute it to drinking the snow-water, and it is strange that it should only be found in places where such water alone can be obtained, and that children never exhibit the slightest appearance of it. Of snow the people are so fond, that they loaded themselves, on returning from Jumnoutri, with large masses of it, for the purpose of eating; and, in winding down the steep paths, the leading men could hardly keep their followers from

pilfering, although likewise loaded—they seemed to have quite a childish fondness for it.

From whatever cause the goitre may arise, it is a pity that the inhabitants of Cursali should have such an addition to their ugliness; they want not that, for they are the plainest as well as dirtiest, that we have met with. I must not include my brahmin guide in this condemnation, for he is a grand exception. I have added to his string of medals, by flattening a bullet and scratching my name upon it; and as it is his greatest pride to accumulate these remembrancers, it already hangs round his neck.

May 28th, 29th.—The morning after our descent from Jumnoutri, we returned to Banassa, to commence a new route across the intervening mountains, to the more celebrated source of the Ganges. I meditated, when I began my interesting tour, to pass from the Jumna to the shores of the Sutlege, traversing the valleys of the Pauber and the Tonse; then crossing the snowy pass of Burunda into Kunawar, continue my track till the jealousy of the guardians of

the celestial empire should turn me back from the confines of Chinese Tartary. I wavered between two equally attractive points: Gungoutri, with the probability of being able to reach Kedar Nath and Badri Nath—the scenes of the saddest of all the fatal delusions which lead their victims, with a nobleness worthy a better cause, to perish miserably—weighed with me, from the gratification I had just enjoyed in viewing the source of the minor river, and I determined to visit it. The season being yet early, and the snow still lying in great depth upon the higher ridges, I was obliged to forego the difficult passage of the range nearest the mighty barrier of everlasting snow.

The rumour of my intention to attempt it caused a mutiny in my camp that threatened to leave me to pursue my way with my knapsack on my back; a general “strike” was declared on the moment I had fixed for departure. It was some time before I could persuade my mutineers to follow me even to the next highest range; they brought me pitiful tales of avalanches, and torrents that had burst their bounds,

and villagers to corroborate them. Threats were in vain ; and I endeavoured to win them by promises, that whenever they could find a goat to sell, I would give it them, provided they did not leave me in the lurch ; and I set out at last under the uncomfortable apprehension of finding myself deserted in my utmost need—left perhaps to build a hut of snow on the summit of some barren hill, while all my worldly wealth was left at the bottom, to the mercy of an unruly river. I do not know that this little dilemma would have heightened my admiration of the sublime and beautiful about me ; for although, like other knights errant, I have no objection to adventures, I should prefer to meet with them like the heroes of story books, who are generally made happy in the last chapter. Meritorious as a death among snow is to the Hindoo, it held forth but a dreary prospect to me.

I did not lament, therefore, abandoning the most difficult way ; for although among these mountains it is impossible to travel but a short distance and find “all barren,” I did not anticipate much from that desolate region ; even if

qualified, I am not prepared to make scientific researches or observations ; as I seek to report only the external appearance, and leave the depths to others to fathom, I am not much to blame for choosing the least of two evils.

The " his-ka-huwa," or poisonous wind, I found gave the greatest alarm to the natives of all they dreaded to meet on the highest ridge : it blows, they imagine, over noxious plants, and carries certain death along with it. The difficulty of respiration at so great a height is, I fancy, the secret of the poisonous wind ; and I remember Mr. Frazer gives some account of its effect upon his followers on that very ridge.

At Banassa we again were deluged with rain, for it fell on our first visit without mercy ; and the natives declare it is almost constantly pouring. It seems to be precisely placed for every passing cloud to deposit its burthen in, at the bottom of a deep funnel formed by the surrounding peaks of high hills. The stories of " hair-breadth 'scapes," and " moving accidents by flood and field," which these people had collected in the village, gave me abundance of employ-



ment, and not a little entertainment; the reporters of these sad tales, who had evidently invented them for the purpose of gratifying the servants, were not very skillful in the arrangement; although persuaded to invent the lies, it must be said in their favour that they were too honest to maintain them. Whenever they were detected in any inconsistency, they laughed, and, shrugging their shoulders, said, perhaps it was not so bad as they represented—"Sahib" would doubtless know better. Although there was an air of irony in the delivery of this compliment to my sagacity, I was resolved to take the merit of it, and this morning we set forth upon our route to Suchi, the first point we proposed to make on the line to Gungoutri. We took a south-east direction, and crossing a high hill, descended *à l'ordinaire* to a stream on its opposite side. We found bridges in several places, and the river, for it deserves to be so called, rushes with tremendous din beneath them. I could not learn its name, for it is large enough to merit one. "Why give it a name?" quoth the guide, "we all know it comes from the mountains, and is

not that enough?" I remember a similar answer at Lakha Mundul from a villager, when I asked him the name of a high peak in the neighbourhood. "It has got no name that I know of," said he; "what is the use of giving a name to a place that one sees every day?" "The spirit of inquiry" is certainly not yet abroad among these simple people; and if it serve to make them less civil or less honest, (for more they cannot be) when it does arise among them, I fear it will not substitute better qualities in their stead.

From the bank of the river we soon reached a small village called Neechnee, beneath the snowy peak of Oonchul; here we were again deluged with rain, and the thermometer is at sixty-four degrees.

In the course of our walk from Banassa, we wound through a thick jungle, where there was great probability of some of the stragglers of the party mistaking the road; to guard against this, the guide cut the branch of a tree, and threw it as a barrier across the wrong road, where two occurred; and where the windings of the path seemed doubtful, he cut a notch on the side of a

tree that pointed in a proper direction. These simple finger-posts were perfectly understood, and although the path was extremely dark and intricate in many places, we arrived, without a stray sheep, in Neehneec.

I am again in an unfrequented tract, and excite an even greater share of observation than I did at Nonano.

Some years ago two white gentlemen crossed these hills, and the natives remember them like some bright exhalations in the evening, never to be seen more, as they thought; they were pleased to see the meteors once again in us. Our approach to a village is the signal for every description of clamour. The dogs, who, by the way, are more numerous than the people, immediately sally forth to defend the entrance, the mountains echoing to their yell. "Tie up your dogs," is the war-cry of my party, as every one waves his staff over his head. "Tie up your dogs," is responded by the older men of the village, when forth sally the young population, and after a brisk engagement with sticks and stones, send them howling to their kennels. The poor animals,

though large and fierce-looking, and certainly opposed to our invasion, do not evince much disposition to bite. However, a canine insurrection, like a human one, had better be crushed in its commencement. This "puny war" gives an éclat to our entrée, and calls the old and the young abroad to gaze upon us.

It is a glorious feeling to enter for the first time within the magic circle of immortal Rome, and forget the present in the restless dream of all that has gone! and I can conceive the "giddy whirl" of the stranger who makes his first plunge into London in the fashionable height of a day; but to be in the midst of a few remnants of the human race, where all around is as awful and magnificent as in the wildest romance, who never before saw a being like me, and who know not whence I come, but marvel at my simplest action—is to me the most indefinable sensation of all. I seem to be wandering on fairy ground; I expect to hear music in the air, and be wiled to some Prospero's cell. I can scarcely hope to meet a Miranda, and have "woods and wilds" and I know not what to encounter to-morrow, under

the guidance of a perfect Caliban, who has just bowed to me, and seems fully prepared to make me his god; he has beseeched, even on his knees, to follow me to Gungoutri.

May 31st.—Yesterday morning, about seven, we set out from Neechnee for the village of Non-gong. The day before, the people of the village asked if they should prepare the road for us; as I was anxious to know what a few hours only could do over so high a hill, I desired that they might be despatched. The path, in the first instance, led up a deep forest of pine-trees, interspersed occasionally with walnuts and hazel. The withered leaves of the pines were so thickly strewed over the ground, that I might have fancied rushes had been spread to honour me. I could have willingly dispensed with the courtesy, for the road being nearly perpendicular, and as nothing is so slippery as the long loose leaves of the fir-trees, I know not how often I measured my length upon them. There was a fine tree, at one time in my struggle, about twenty feet above me, the roots of which ran across the track, and where I counted upon a momentary stay if I could but reach them,

every third step I took I slipped down five. With Sisyphus and his rock it was pastime, compared to my labour to gain this goal. I at one time fell upon my face, and in endeavouring to recover, rolled down thirty or forty feet. I tried every possible method, sometimes the measured pace of a tragic hero, then "like a wounded snake dragged my slow length along." The Indian fanatics who crawl their pilgrimages, would not be such blockheads, if they confined their experiments to the mountain penances, for that is certainly the safest plan. When at last I reached my tree, I looked above for another to conclude a new task at, and thus by short stages, and in a few hours, gained the height of the wood. We burst upon a beautiful lawn, perfectly level, and enamelled with every description of simple flower—daisies, cowslips, primroses, violets, and crocuses of every hue.

It was surrounded by a fence of pale rhododendron; in all other parts we had met this plant as a large tree—here it had dwindled to a shrub. Above was a line of rugged peaks capped with snow, which in many parts de-

ascended to the borders of the meadow. Nature never appeared so frolicsome. This spot seemed to be the rendezvous of all seasons. There was winter in his coat of snow; summer reposing in a strawberry-bed, or smiling from the branches of an apricot-tree; spring couched in a "cowslip bell;" and of autumn we experienced enough in the fallen leaves, which, still to concentrate the various periods of the year, fell from the branches of the trees that stood among the snow.

As I looked round with a glass, I could discern, on one side of the mountains, fields of grain quite green, and but just above the earth; on the other it was harvest-home, and the partridges were busy in the stubble. I would have given any thing to have remained some days here, but there was no water, and I could not persuade my servants that the snow was equally good: they should die, they declared, if they touched it, and trembled at the bare idea. We could have made strawberry ice in a most delightful manner—collected the snow with one hand, and picked the fruit with the other. In vain did I represent its comforts, and its beauties

were quite lost upon them. I swallowed snow till I was as cold as ice, to convince them, but they were still inexorable.

The peak of Bundurpuch, towering above us like a rock of alabaster, was quite close—one ridge only intervening—the one I had abandoned, and the snow upon it seemed very deep indeed, the sky was clear and blue as Italy's, and not a speck appeared upon the snow-white mountain. I saw an eagle soaring above it. We had disturbed several, for he had towered to "their pride of place." They flew within shot, but I learnt from the "ancient mariner," how sad it is to kill the spirit of the place, and let them fly in peace. Many of the same species of pheasant that we had before met with, ran about the steepest parts of the hills, but we never could get near enough to fire at them. They possessed too much the "vantage of the ground."

To return for a moment to our road-makers—their labour consisted in throwing the trunk of a tree across a torrent, or a gap in the path, made perhaps by some large stone rolling from above—a constant occurrence—and dreadful is



the crash of trees below upon such an avalanche, and the thunder of its sound is beyond all belief. A pine had fallen in some places across the way, and many others were nodding to their fall. So large were the trunks of those that stopped the path, for age had overthrown them, that it was necessary to have one step at least cut on each side, to save the trouble of a scramble. This had been also done by the pioneers, whose ingenious contrivances are sometimes more difficult to overcome than the obstacles they are meant to remove. They had all assembled by a torrent about midway up, and hailed our approach with a cry of "Buxces! Buxces!" the first time I had ever heard such a shout in the mountains. "Buxces for making the road." "And what have you done to it?" I inquired. "Made it quite easy," replied a sturdy fellow, as if smiling at my exhausted appearance, for I sat panting on a stone scarcely able to bend my limbs under me; while another cried, "Look what a good step I've made," pointing to a small chip in a rock of about an inch deep. As I had just fallen from this identical

step, and dragged half of the wall I was attempting to escalate with me, and sat gathering breath to renew the attack upon my hands and knees, it looked a little too like a joke to make me particularly anxious to employ pioneers again, and I determined in future to take the road "in the rough."

These road-makers are a strange race of beings, and when they wish to get money, try every means but those that appear the simplest. They will watch all day to snare a pheasant for a few pence, but will not sell one of their own chickens, though abundance strut about. They refuse to dispose of a sheep or goat, when the pasture is scarcely sufficient for them; but toil all night to catch an antelope or young elk. I have had several of the latter brought to me since I have been in the hills, but have not been able to keep them alive more than a few days. I was anxious to deceive my goats into adopting them, but without success; and spoon-meat—for they were not old enough to lap—had no temptation for them. Their sheep, which are very numerous, are small, and generally have black heads. They

seldom kill them. for, throughout the year, in the higher parts, they wear woollen clothes, and keep them for the purpose of supplying them only. The goats, when age has rendered them unfit for other use, and, to our tastes, very unfit indeed for the last to which they are applied, afford the only flesh they care about eating. The cattle are esteemed fully as much as on the plains: and although they would consider it extremely sinful to slay a cow or a bull, I do not find that the poor animals benefit much by the scruples, for they are beaten most unmercifully upon all occasions.

I have often wondered at the inconsistency of people, (and it is much the case all over India,) who hold the animal in the highest veneration, and beat it with the utmost inhumanity at the same time. If I were a cow, and could choose my lot, I should prefer the profane country of "Beef-eaters," to the one where I might be adored in precept, but in practice most cruelly treated. Although I do not anticipate much improvement to the cattle by a further intercourse with the plains, yet the people must be-

ness materially; the greater communication likely to ensue from the late establishment in the hills, and the increasing taste for travelling among them, must eventually spread a degree of civilization throughout. At present they are sunk in a wretched state of degradation, and, save in the gift of speech, are little higher in the scale of humanity than the monkeys that infest their woods.

Their religion, if it can be so called, consists in listening to the muttering of one, whom they term a Brahmin, ragged and illiterate as themselves; in venerating streams and fountains, because they know not whence they spring; in deeming sacred any phenomenon of nature they cannot account for; in adoring a mountain because it looks like a buffalo; and in worshipping the cavity of a rock because they fancy it resembles a cow's mouth. Social ties or affections, they can have no notion of. Their marriages are infamous, and a father offers his only child for sale. In dirtiness the men are only surpassed by the women. I have already described the dress of these remarkable specimens

of the softer sex, with their hair hanging in savage irregularity round their countenances. Although carrying water for the use of the house is one of their principal occupations, they are so chary of their labour that they take care never to consume a drop of it even on their own persons.

They have similar ideas of luxury to the peasants of more civilized nations : their work at an end, they bask in groups in the sun, playing with the tangles of each other's hair, and cautiously laying on one side of the object of their search, when they have taken it. The ground about their villages is literally teeming with vermin ; and their abodes present too filthy an exterior to tempt me to pass the threshold. The children are not quite so dirty as their elders, merely because they are not so old ; but give great promise of rivalling them, for they grow in dirt as they advance in years. It is melancholy that such

“ ————A wilderness of sweets—

For Nature here wantoned as in her prime,  
And played at will her virgin fancies,”

Pouring forth more sweet, wild above rule or art,  
Enormous bliss !”

should be so inhabited.

To return to my journey. As I was obliged to quit my “Hall of the Seasons,” I climbed up to the top of the high ridge above it, over which lay the track ; and from its summit beheld one of the most magnificent scenes, the sublimest imagination could conceive. I had passed over about a mile of snow, four or five feet deep, but hard enough to bear me, without much sinking ; and was glad to have something to draw my thoughts from the fatigue, for such the natives even consider it ; and many of the most devout have raised a species of altar to commemorate the feat, consisting of a heap of stones, surrounding a high one placed upright in the middle. They fringe the crest of the mountain ; and to each in succession, as they reached them, my guides made their salaams, and returned thanks to whatever divinity they were dedicated, for having assisted them to reach such a height.

Behind me, to the north-west, were the snows of Bundurpuch and Dootie, whence the Jumna

Sooner than towards the east, rose the high peaks which mark the source of the holy river, the Ganges—the Rudra Himalah, like a white cloud, in the horizon—Kedar Nath and Badri Nath, those mighty objects of Hindoo superstition, rising with the skies; so far out-topping other heights that I had almost considered them illusory. I began to doubt, as I gazed on them, whether there was any interval between heaven and earth. When I remembered that I was standing, on the 30th of May, on a mountain covered with snow, not ten degrees from the tropics, and that the peaks I was looking at were higher above me than Mont Blanc from the plain, and Mount Etna from the sea, I was breathless with astonishment.

“The Alps, the Apennines, the Pyrenean, and the river Po,” though they may excel in exquisite beauty, and the charm a consciousness of civilisation casts over scenery, must yield, in grandeur and sublimity, to the “snowy Imaus,” and the mysterious rivers which rise in them: scenes over which superstition has cast a halo, that invests them with something like a sacred

character, even in the eyes of those who are free from its influence.

Before me, towards the south, were less grand, but more varied prospects:—at the foot of the hill where I stood, but far below, stretched yellow fields in terraces, to the edge of a winding stream; as well as wooded ridges, and peaks, crowned with pines, their sides blooming with lilac and rhododendron. All around, far as the eye could reach—and that was far indeed—were mountains, interminable mountains, of every shape and every hue: the clefts on the edges of some were masses of snow, shining through the open trees: rough and rugged rocks, opposing their barrenness to gently-rising hills, as carefully and tastily planted, as if by the hand of art: dark, impenetrable forests, with torrents of water roaring through them; and little clusters of fruit-trees, with birds of sweetest notes singing within them. The summit of Oonchal was, for a time, ecstasy. My descent to the village of Nongong was pure matter-of-fact indeed. It occupied about three hours: such slipping, sliding, and scrambling, no mortal, that has not



made the attempt, can form any idea of. We had to creep down by the uneven surface of the stony hill, for a long distance, where the ledges upon which we placed our feet were scarcely broad enough to admit them. Several times I was nearly falling a victim to love of the picturesque. If I looked round for a moment, which I could scarcely resist doing, I was soon restored to attention by rolling down ten or twenty feet.

It was six o'clock in the afternoon when we reached Nongong: we had been out from seven in the morning. My tent did not arrive till it was quite dark: and I had wandered to a mass of large stones, that I fancied bore some resemblance to an English churchyard, and upon one of them—

“ For exercise will score upon the flint,  
While sloth finds the down pillow hard ”

I fell fast asleep. It was not till a hue and cry had been raised about me, that I was disturbed from my nap.

We are obliged to halt this day, as every body is tired with yesterday's journey. We have found our situation extremely hot; and the sudden change to so high a temperature—for the thermometer is 92°—is not the least of our calamities: the accompaniments of heat, innumerable flies, have kept me at war all day; and the renewal of a stinging torture has driven us nearly frantic. The insect, upon this occasion, is larger than a wasp: they fly about in hundreds, and add to the torment of the former small insects, by the constant apprehension of a bite: for we can see them approach too plainly, and find it impossible to guard against them.

In the course of our ascent, the guides and coolies stopped frequently to rest, and on each occasion established a smoking club, that for sociability far exceeds any that the good taste of the "picked men of countries" has been able to confer upon England. The natives are remarkably fond of tobacco, and always carry a well-supplied pouch, with a flint and steel. Their pipes are to be found on every hill: they make

two holes in the earth with the thumb, connecting them below by passing the little finger through the interval; in one they stick a reed, and in the other the tobacco: the weed is soon kindled, and a circle formed round it. Each man takes his turn in smoking and supplying the pipe, which is left standing when they have all been satisfied, for the next passengers to take advantage of, if they please. I became quite an adept in manufacturing pipes, and found the flavour of the earth rather an improvement even to Persian tobacco.

I have heard that men of high fashion are accustomed to smoke cigars through the streets of London, and in the park, at all hours of the day. Should such an elegant accomplishment continue in vogue, I will not presume to condemn it, but beg to suggest the above new and sociable mode in preference to it. Groups may sit round their pipes in Kensington Gardens, or the park, and smoke and converse with all the decorum of a Turkish divan, without in the least annoying the fastidious, who affect to dislike so agreeable an odour.

I gained the reputation of a magician in one of our smoking societies, by drawing fire from the sky, as they termed it, to light my pipe. I made a burning-glass answer the purpose of a flint and steel, and the Genii of the Ring would not have been looked upon with greater veneration. I was forced, however, to endure these scenes a little too often, for if we paused but for a moment to gain breath, the pouch was drawn forth, and the knot formed around the broken reed. I could have wished that their ingenuity had devised a pipe more calculated for travellers, for this primitive arrangement is only suitable for loungers, and perfect idleness; it delayed us sadly, but it was a luxury no persuasion could induce them to forego; and the deliberate manner they set about its preparation, as if every thing on earth was subservient to it, added fuel to my impatience. Whenever I chafed at the loss of so much time, they remained, however, as immovable as Turks. "*Qui vive sans tabac est indigne de vivre.*" Although they could not express it, their looks implied a

most perfect belief in this glorious maxim, which I have always thought seemed written on the brow of every subject of the Sublime Porte, when his kaledon was at his lips.

END OF VOL. I.

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EXCURSIONS  
IN INDIA;

INCLUDING A WALK OVER  
THE HIMALAYA MOUNTAINS,  
TO THE SOURCES OF  
THE JUMNA AND THE GANGES.

BY CAPTAIN THOMAS SKINNER,  
OF THE 31ST REGIMENT.

Whereas of entire vast and deserts side,  
Rough gnarled rocks, and hills whose heads touch heav'n,  
It was my hint to speak.

SHAKESPEARE.

SECOND EDITION.  
IN TWO VOLUMES.

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## EXCURSIONS IN INDIA.

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### CHAPTER I.

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**JUNE 1st.**—By our day's rest we had acquired vigour enough to make another clamber to the opposite side of a high mountain, which appeared thickly wooded, and divided from us by a rapid stream, when we found the village of Bukoulie. We met in our route every variety of road, and the necessity for every manner of moving. In some parts of the forest we saw several jungle fowl: they have exactly the same



habits as the domestic poultry. The cock struts at the head of his hens, and keeps a strict watch over their safety. Whenever they were disturbed by our attempts upon them, he flew to the highest branch of some tree beyond our reach, and crowed with all his might, while his dames ran into holes and corners to escape our attacks: they are so cunning that we found it impossible to get within shot of them, with all the caution we could use. While intent upon capturing at least one, as we were creeping after them upon our breasts, lying occasionally like riflemen under cover of the unevenness of the ground to catch them *en passant*, we came suddenly upon an ambuscade that very soon put an end to our sport.

We were about midway up the face of a hill that was thickly covered by trees, and much clogged by shrubs and creepers that wound in all directions. On reaching the foot of the enemy's position, still advancing upon our breasts, and bending a keen eye upon the birds strutting before us, up rose, with a growl that denoted an offended spirit, (for we had literally touched his

tail,) a large black bear; and turning round, looked us in the face with the most undisguised astonishment. It was the most unsought, as well as unpromising introduction I had ever met with. There was no time for parley; and, getting upon our legs, we at once stood on the defensive. This sudden metamorphosis completed his surprise, and, yelling louder than before, he set off as fast as he could shuffle from the extraordinary animals that had so unaccountably sprung up before him.

We determined that discretion was the better part of valour, and began to retrace our steps, letting the jungle fowl benefit by the interruption. Having much faith in proverbs, and in none more than in that which declares that "familiarity breeds contempt," we resolved that the bear should not learn to despise us by a repetition of the intercourse: we continued our journey, and in a few hours arrived at Bukoulie. It is situated similarly to the one in which we had passed the last two days, a valley confined by high mountains.

Immediately opposite to where our tents were

pitched, the grass had been wet on fire, and smoked the whole day long. There was no wind to carry away the vapour, which, hanging about the vale, added very much to its heat: it felt exactly like the atmosphere in a hot climate, when an oppressive stillness indicates the approach of a storm.

I did not at first perceive the cause of this mountain sirocco, but almost apprehended an earthquake. At night, however, it displayed itself in the most splendid manner: the flames that the "garish day" had eclipsed, blazed forth with the brightest beauty, and in the most fantastic manner. Had a Tivoli been established on the face of the opposite mountain, its festoons of light could not have been more tastefully arranged. It was a long and high ridge, covered to its summit with pine-trees, and here and there jagged with clefts of stone, the bottoms of which were furzed with bushes; a stream flowed at its base, and its sides curved gradually from the top to the water below. The flame first stole gently up the sides, and met on the summit; another line of fire ran from its

base, in circles and semicircles in every direction, communicating with the sides in several places, till all seemed arranged for some great festival with the utmost precision.

These regular lines of light did not long continue ; for it suddenly burst forth into one universal blaze, with an effect as startling, but far more brilliant, than the St. Peter's dome, when the clock strikes eight upon the celebration of that saint's day. Now the fire crept along the ground, and then rushed to the top of towering pines, which in a few moments, nodding and crackling, fell to the earth, with a noise that might have passed for the beginning of an eruption of Vesuvius : large fragments of rock, that lost their support by the falling of the trees, rolled to the bottom with a din that told what the height of a volcano is. For a moment a line of fire was lost in one of the clefts, and, fed by the wood within it, came rushing forth with tremendous fury, " a giant refreshed ; " while a continual and steady light illuminated the top, from the numerous gummy firs that capped it. No rain had fallen for a long time,

and the communication was as rapid as possible: sparks flew to the opposite side and the mountains round, which were soon ignited.

In a few hours I seemed the centre of a world in flames, and felt some slight apprehension of being roasted. I was like the scorpion within his circle of fire, and seemed to have no chance of escaping the ordeal, but by proving myself a Cato: for the crackling sound drew nearer and nearer, and the heat was quickly becoming greater and greater. It seemed like the burning of a desolate city; and I had only to people it in my imagination with shrieking inhabitants, to make it as striking a picture of a fire as any on record, for the general outline was sketched with a bold and powerful hand. However, the element was under control, for I live to tell the tale and to describe a more domestic blaze that took place in my own little circle.

There is great authority for this transition from the sublime downwards, to what may deserve to be deemed, perhaps, the ridiculous. My coolies, imagining that their long journey merited a reward, claimed my promise of the

goat. They discovered one for sale in the village, and with petitioning looks brought it before me. It was very large, with fine horns and long hair, and might have been about ten years old. The circumstance of its being the acknowledged father of most of the flock in the village, did not seem to dismay them in the least; and on my granting the feast, they assembled round it, chanting something that may have been meant for a thanksgiving. They then prepared the pile as if for a sacrifice; and, leading the animal up to it, severed his head from his body at one blow, and allowed him to bleed over the faggots. It is deemed most unfortunate to be obliged to inflict a second stroke; and a shout of joy hails the headsman who completes the execution at the first. To facilitate as much as possible the operation while the executioner stands ready, with uplifted sword, by the animal's side, another tempts him with his favourite herbs to stretch his neck, realizing to the letter the beautiful lines of Pope:

Pleased to the last he crops the flow'ry food,  
And licks the hand just raised to shed his blood!

The bloody faggots were thrown upon the fire, that had been kindled at a little distance, and the charm seemed wound up : the skin was torn off in a few minutes, and the carcase cooked and divided. In less than an hour the banquet was spread ; and loud singing, with the gentle accompaniment of a tom-tom which they had picked up in the village, gave sufficient proof that they were pleased with the repast.

As I witnessed the preparation with great interest, they were anxious nothing should escape me, and brought me the head of the poor ram that had just undergone a singeing with a burnt stick before it was plunged into the soup. I was curious to learn if a haggess would succeed the "singied head;" but Scotland may still boast undivided right to the "chieftain of the pudding race," as far as my mountain cooks' art goes : it must no longer, however, refuse to share the glory of sheep's-head broth, which may be now considered, in spite of the fastidiousness of the south, the taste of Nature ; for surely the inhabitants of the Himalaya have never learnt the art from any other mistresses.

June 2nd and 3rd.—We left Bukoulie, still smoking, at daylight in the morning; and passing the small village of Egaroo, down to a rapid river, we skirted the ruins of the imaginary city we had seen in flames. Many a goodly tree lay prostrate, and the hill was blackened from top to bottom. We soon ascended to a great height by a dark and dreary forest, where a German novelist would lay the scene of a romance. None but the Spirit of the Waters could inhabit such a place; and when passing the bed of a torrent which roared through a gloomy channel with no light to guide us from its dangers but the white sheet that the spray had formed over them, we expected to see Undine arise and welcome us to her favourite haunt.

The magnificent trees, that shut out the day from these places, were generally chesnuts, and this was the first time we had met with them. They grow to a great height, and some of them measured nearly thirty feet in circumference. The woods were full of pheasants: the moonal and the horned pheasant—the beautiful plumage of the latter, its grey coat with a white spot



upon every feather, its golden breast and neck with its purple horns—while it hung calmly over the bounding cataract, gazing on us with its quiet black eye—seemed singularly out of character with the wildness of the scenery around.

When we quitted this forest we reached a lawn of great richness, through which trickled a clear stream, where we were glad to pause awhile and refresh after our labour. Mora was the name the natives gave to this spot. Beautiful as it was, we decided that it was not quite high enough, and soon recommended our exertions; and, after another ascent through a dismal forest, reached a clear space on its summit, similar to, but smaller than, the one below. This was named Chatterlong; and here we determined to set up our rest for the remainder of the day. It was wildly situated—just room for our little camp on a green covered with strawberries, and all the flowers that we love to see in England: how delightful must such a meeting be here! Those only who have toiled over the desert know how to value the charms of the first green spot they reach; and will not

be surprised at my joy in plucking a cowslip, after having been several years on the plains of India !

We were surrounded by wood on every side but one, that was open to the view of Bundurpuch. No village was within sight, and the trees around were so thick that we could make no way through them : we were confined in our observations to the space on which we stood. It was delightfully cool ; the thermometer at noon was 70°, and at night and in the morning 49° and 51°. We were generally too glad to rest to care about exploring our neighbourhood, unless something very promising invited ; we never failed, however, in falling upon beauties, when we did move in pursuit of them.

After a night's rest on this beautiful little spot, we toiled up the hill that rose above it, and in an hour reached its summit, where we found a clear space immediately below a ridge of peaks covered with snow : over one of them we crossed, and from it had a very fine view, less extensive than the former from Oonchul, but still magnificent. We seemed to have penetrated to

the very regions of snow, and almost to be transported to a polar ocean. We were level with the lowest apparent range of congelation, and the peaks that bounded our frozen sea rose like icebergs above it. The general livery of perpetual snow was visible for a great distance.

Chumora was the common name of the ridge on which we stood, but Deshra the particular peak we were passing over. On descending from it, we found a meadow of great extent with flocks of goats and sheep browsing upon it: the pasture appeared to be rich and plentiful, but in many parts it was still under snow, in which the sheep seemed to take particular pleasure in standing in crowds closely packed together: they belonged principally to the villages on the banks of the Ganges.

The life of a shepherd is by no means a light one: he has to drive his flocks a great distance for food, and often to travel far in pursuit of a stray lamb. Not very far from where the pasture was, were two small lakes; one of them prettily surrounded by wood. The situation

seemed made for flocks and herds. On the tops of the peaks around, and on the brow of the mountain, I observed many of the same description of piles of stone I have before mentioned. This seemed a more essential duty here than even on the last height where I had met them; and my guide besought me to allow him to erect a memento of my passage across, and assured me it would be of essential service to me to have a representative so close to the divinity of the Jumna—for we were quitting his precincts for those of the Ganges. He pointed out the pillars of many "Sahib Logue," whom he had assisted to elevate them; but they are destined to be nameless, or at least to have their names so altered in the pronunciation, that it will be impossible to discover them. I chose a peak where Bundurpuch could overlook me most admirably, and after a little labour erected my testimony of respect for his sanctity; and if the snowy god surveys the abode of my spirit, which my guide assured me it would become, with half the pleasure that I have done his, I shall be perfectly satisfied.

We were not long in commencing our descent : it was as scrambling and sliding as usual. After emerging from a grove of reeds, (many of them broken and strewed on the ground, which gave a variety to the cause of our slipping, though the effect was much the same,) we found ourselves on the point of a projecting crag that "beetled o'er its base," and gave us the first glimpse of the Ganges, which was rapid and broad, but dark and sandy as it flows through the plains. If the sound of *Jumona* excited my followers to a high pitch, at merely the commencement of their pilgrimage, how much more so would the thrice welcome shout of *Gunga Jee!* when they had at length gained it, after a painful journey of more than thirty days. *Gunga Jee!* was the universal cry for some minutes; and *Gunga Jee!* was echoed by the woods and hills around, till it reached the ears of the slowest of my stragglers, when, calling upon its name long before they saw it, they endeavoured to rush forward, and enjoy the sight they had been so long toiling to obtain. The Hindoos salaam'd and muttered its name

over and over again ; and even the unbending Mahometan seemed in some way softened by the scene. I sat on one side to allow full scope to their feelings, affected by the beauty of the picture as much as they were by the veneration of the river.

The coolies were resolved that it should prove a day of jubilee, and assured me that the goat-herd they had passed declared there was a ram to be sold in the village of Barsoo, whither we were going. I promised, if that were the case, they should feast upon it, and gave my servants leave to rest an hour to expatiate on the magnificence of the scene, and luxuriate in anticipation on the prospect of a pure draught of water at last.

“ What do you think of the Ganges now ? ” I asked of one of my bearers. “ I shall have a drink of good water,” was his reply. Faith goes a great way ; but, from the distant view we were taking of it, I did not expect any greater purity than I find in the mountain springs. The villages that rose above the banks of the river, (and we could see many of them,) were very neat ; and the cultivation extended over the whole face of the country, from below us to the

water: the corn was still green. We left this fertile tract, however, and kept to the north-east, and were not long in arriving at Barsoo. It was considerably above the river: so we were forced to be content with the prospect still, and quench our thirst with what appetite we could on the rills that ran from the hills about us.

June 4th.—We are disappointed again in not being able to reach the Holy River: our journey this day was up the sides of a rocky mountain exposed to the eastern sun, with not a single tree to shelter us. In about four hours we gained the hamlet of Tearoo, and pitched on a little pinnacle above it whence we can see the Ganges, to which we hope to descend to-morrow. Sri Kantā, a rugged peak, that rises so abruptly as scarcely to afford rest for the snow, through which the black edges of its furrows shine, and make a striking contrast to the unstained white of all around, is immediately opposite us. The red spinach, that coloured the hills at Barree, “making the green one red,” grows in great quantity about Tearoo.

We met here a person of some authority from the Rajah of Tirhce, having a spear and a formi-

dable sword, which hung in a broad belt of scarlet cloth from his shoulder: he was attended by several followers, and had come to collect the revenue of this and the higher villages. Tearoo was rated at twenty-five rupees a year; and as all beyond have about the same advantages, I suppose that is the general stipend paid to the government of Sirinagur. The visits of this important personage are the only communications that take place between his master and subjects; for they never feel disposed to venture to his court: even for justice it was not worth while to make so long a journey; a native of a village only a few days' distance from the Dhoon, told me, when I asked him, how he would obtain justice if he were injured. They cannot have much occasion to apply for it; for no crimes, according to their code of morality, can take place among them: they are the most perfectly honest people in the world; although they had every opportunity of pilfering, from the careless manner in which my things were allowed to lie about, I never lost an article.

When the members of a village are as one family, it would require no great vigilance to de-



fect any misdemeanour, if such were likely to occur. I never could hear, however, of a criminal of the slightest degree in any part of the mountains. The same deference is yielded to age among them, as is generally in savage tribes. Although the young men do not rise on the approach of an old one, they obey him with great readiness; and the most aged is generally the ruler or head man of a village.

I was obliged to hire a person some days ago to carry a portion of my tent; and the only one that could be spared was an old man. He willingly took up the burden; and the moment he had shouldered it, a murmur arose that he was too old for such a weight, and even women were anxious to spare him the labour. His pride, perhaps, was hurt, for he refused all assistance, and trudged briskly away.

As the path was dangerous, his fellow-villagers begged the party to take care of him, and watch that he did not stumble: he laughed at their care, and assured me that he could travel with any man in the hills. He had not gone very far, when a scream from the village, which overhung a deep precipice, (the opposite side

of which we were winding down by a stony and nearly perpendicular track,) intimated that something had happened. I ran to the edge of the abyss, and saw my poor old man with his load still sticking to his back, rolling away to the bottom of it. He had been too confident, and his pride was doomed to have a severe fall. There was an immediate pursuit from both sides: the people of the village gained the race; and just as the old man had disengaged himself from the load, which went bounding away, a youth interposed, and saved him. "He is too old," was the only comment made by the lookers-on, which was murmured in every variety of tone. They carried him to the road again, and insisted upon his returning to the village, where, from the loud voices I soon heard, the women took the liberty of rating him soundly for his folly. It is only for civilized countries to display the scandal of neglected old age. It should be a mortifying reflection, that among savages alone can those who have fallen 'into the sere' look with certainty to command that respect which should accompany old age.

## CHAPTER II.

Arrival at the Bhagirathi—Water of the Ganges—Monkeys—  
Valley of Sochi—Difficult journey—Ascent of pyramids—  
"Gopal's causeway"—Rocky pass—Ingratious excuses—  
Grandeur of mountain scenery—A female pilgrim—Reli-  
gious mendicants—Asking charity—Village of Mookba—  
Want of supplies—Mountain priests—Substitute for writing-  
paper—Deaf and dumb children—Supposed idiots—Situa-  
tion of Dorah—Frozen region.

JUNE 5th.—At last we are seated by the banks of the Bhagirathi—this is the sacred name of the Ganges, and is generally applied by Hindoos to that part of it within the mountains and the holy branch that flows past Moorshedabad, and changes afterwards into the Hoogly. This Bhagirathi was the choleric saint who drank the river dry, when it once impeded his course, and gave it up again at the earnest intercession of another saint, a greater friend to his fellow-creatures.

Descending from Tearoo, we passed over the rocky sides of high mountains to a large stream that ran into the river, from the snowy summit of

a neighbouring mount. It was not an easy way by any means that brought us to the shore of this long-expected object. My servants, who seemed to have practised a rigorous self-denial till they could meet with their reward, rushed forward to seize it, in a draught of water from the Ganges; and revelled in its filth, I may say: for when one of them hastened to gratify me, as he imagined, with the divine element, I was forced to put it from my lips, so great was the sediment.

We had been out six hours, and I chose a spot, (the only clear space we could find) on the banks of the river to encamp on. There was a high rock behind it, from which a cataract fell: both the profane and devout therefore could be satisfied by slaking their thirst in their own way, for I persisted in belonging to the former class, in spite of the contempt and astonishment my taste gave rise to. The river is about eighty yards wide, and flows rapidly over a bed of stone with so great a noise, that frequently during the night I fancied there was a violent storm. The water has the same appearance as it possesses in the plains—of the colour of sand, and much im-

pregnated with it when skimmed even from the surface. The river is very deep in some places, and passes smoothly over its bed, but with great rapidity : for when intercepted by the slightest obstacles, it chafes with tremendous uproar.

Opposite us, on the other side of the river, is a steep crag, on which play innumerable monkeys, with black faces and grey beards, bearing the strongest resemblance to the old men of the mountains. They seem confounded with our establishment, and we are evidently objects of much speculation to them. The rock on which they gambol is as high as Dover Cliff; and some hang half way down, not engaged in the dreadful trade of gathering samphire, but in watching all our movements, from as fearful positions. A black bear of very good size (I say black because there are many white ones in the mountains) came down to the water to drink ; but on seeing us, he thought it prudent to retire.

June 6th.—Suchi, where we are now arrived, is the second village on the Ganges ; and from the nearly impassable barrier that divides it from those below, it seems to belong to the mysterious regions that every fresh footstep shows

us we are fast approaching ; for a gate of difficulty and danger is placed beneath it, to warn the traveller that it is no light labour to attain even an earthly shrine. Much is to be suffered and overcome, before this boundary can be passed ; and a hard task it was to persuade my followers to attempt it.

I can never hope to convey a description of our struggles to win the precincts of Gungoutri, yet must endeavour to give some little idea of them. On leaving our former abode, we passed over a brittle bridge of wattle to the left bank of the river. It was a hundred yards broad—rather a long distance for the trembling contrivances used for passing. For more than a mile, (or, to compute more certainly, for half an hour,) we hopped over a path of loose pointed stones, their sharpest parts turned up, as though they had been placed there on purpose, as a trial of fortitude to the pilgrims who go barefooted to the source of the river. The penance is not unlike the infliction of a shoe full of peas ; but with this additional disadvantage, that it would be impossible to “soften rocks”—at least by boiling them.

The same sort of overhanging cliffs of great height, between which we were encamped yesterday, rose above the river; and we were obliged to pass up their faces by the unevenness in them. The ascent of the great Pyramid of Ghizeh, with much less room and regularity than its angle, presents the nearest comparison I can find for it; but it was a frequent recurrence of such a feat. We had no sooner crossed one pyramid, than another offered itself to our escalade. Where two projecting parts were too far asunder to allow of their being taken at a step, the branch of a tree was thrown across, and made so doubtful a footing, it was impossible to pause on the spring. Ladders, similar to those of Jumnoutri, were placed against the slippery surfaces of rocks where there was no rest for the feet. Sometimes they were fastened above by ropes of twisted grass, yet green, and sometimes left to be steadied by the weight of the body that was ascending.

I estimated the height of two or three at thirty feet; and while the water was foaming below, and the trunk of the tree trembled in the grasp, it was

not surprising that no sound was heard but the heavy beating of the hearts around. Convulsions had occasionally riven the rock, and the intervals were filled up by the steps of wood so singularly contrived, that it was as difficult to mount from one to another, as it would have been to spring up the space. It seemed to be the intention of the artisans of Suchi, (for to their ingenuity we were indebted for our passage,) to afford as much variety as they could : to assist us to slide down the faces of rocks, they formed a channel between two trees, in the middle of which we placed ourselves, and slipped with the suddenness of a sledge to the bottom. It required no practice to excel in this "*facilis deventus*;" the great lesson to learn was when and where to stop, for the attainment of which we were too often justified in apprehending a hopeless incapacity.

We nevertheless passed this "Giant's Causeway" in safety, and soon entered a country that struck us with as much surprise as the enchanted kingdom of the Prince of the Black Isles had inspired the king with in the Arabian Nights' Entertainments, when it sprung up on the skirts of



THE FIRST THING. We were obliged to wait by the banks of a river of stone or iron, and indeed some of them were of iron, and some of them of stone. It is for more than an hour we waited, and at last a word, and it was found that the mountain had a circular form, and that it was the mountain of a lake.

We continued, while waiting, to perceive the mountain, it was a tall one, although its structure, that might have been placed by the side of Loch Lomond. It was now before we arrived at Su-oh, where we were glad to find the shelter of an overhanging rock, to wait the arrival of our tent-brother. The heaver, although heaver, trembled at the hazard of carrying their burdens over the pass, and when we approached it, we found many of them sitting in despair at the bottom. "We shall be killed," "we are dying," were the speeches that assailed us. We were obliged to conceal our own astonishment at the height before us, and affected to laugh at their fears. We were afraid to recommend any plan to facilitate their passage, lest they might view upon it as an admission of the danger, and overcome our

purpose by their clamour. We passed on, therefore, without seeming to notice them, further than by smiling at their thinking it necessary to rest; and left them to "screw their courage to the sticking-point" as they best might; feeling certain, that as we had gone before, the things would in some way be sure to follow. We were not disappointed—they did arrive; but night had nearly set in upon us first.

The Tindal thought it necessary to excuse his delay by a long catalogue of sensations, delivered with all the hyperbole of an eastern story-teller: "This one's heart burst;" and "that one's head split;"—"one trembled at the bottom;" and "the other tottered on the top." No accident, however, occurred, and we were not sorry to witness the preparations making for our first meal at seven o'clock in the evening.

"How romantic!" I think I hear you exclaim, to lie all day in a cave, where the Seven Sleepers might have remained still undiscovered—gazing upon woods and wilds, thundering cataracts, and rushing rivers! But alas! the romance of even such scenes soon dies away before the unpoetical spirit

of hunger that had accompanied us to our retreat. I began to be sadly weary of my uninterrupted seclusion. *La solitude est une belle chose* : but it requires, after all, something more even than being able to say to a responsive *quelqu'un* : "*La solitude est une belle chose.*" I am not ashamed to say that a pic-nic heightens such a scene considerably.

There is something, however, in the stillness, the awful stillness of a mountain summit, where, as in the Himalaya, above all human associations, it exceeds even the deepest feelings ever yet excited by the regions of romance. Though a mind were perfectly incapable before of solemn contemplation, it could hardly resist rising to it in such a situation : there is a monotony—a harrowing waste, in the solitary desert, that withers the spirit as the soil is parched. It is not easy to conceive the rapture that the refugee Frenchman declared it gave him to gallop over its dusty sands. I should not find it difficult, however, to sympathize with him, had he avowed such a feeling from even the least towering of this mighty region. Mountaineers have ever been

celebrated for their devotion to their native hills : and who can be surprised at such love, even where it grows into contempt for the "Sassenach?" What naturalist can expect the eagle to nestle with the wren? I can never restrain my enthusiasm, when I write of the grandeur of mountain-scenery. But to return to the beauties of the Ganges.

Fragments of cooking vessels and blackened stones, by the water's side, showed that we had fallen upon the track of pilgrims. We have met many returning from Gungoutri, though we have been only one day on the route thither; several had come from great distances, and were carrying the holy water from the source of the river to their respective abodes, even to Benares and to Juggernaut. Among them was a woman of apparently eighteen or twenty years of age, who had travelled from Mhow, and had been to Jum-noutri as well as Gungoutri, and was now on her way to Kedar-Nath. She chose the longest, though easiest way, and from the Jumna had reached the Ganges at Barahat. She had lost her husband not long ago, and was making a pilgrimage to these holy spots for the peace of his

soul: her labour to attain this object was tremendous; for she was half-naked, and her feet were bleeding from the pointed stones. I fancied that she had adopted this mode in preference to the Suttee, and looked with great interest upon her; but I could not learn her history: all she possessed, her cooking-pots and food, she carried in a bundle on her head. A roguish-looking brahmin, who seemed to encourage her piety, took something more, I suspect, than a fatherly care of her.

In the plains, and particularly in the neighbourhood of Allahabad, I had often observed strings of religious mendicants, with bottles of water balanced across their shoulders; and although I was then willing to accord them all praise, I shall view them as much more meritorious, now that I have been able to witness their difficulties in obtaining it. It seems indeed an absurdity, that so great a labour should be bestowed for a phial of dirty water; but it is explained satisfactorily enough, when we learn that the rich men of the plains are glad to give large prices for it: they take very good care, however, never to go in pursuit of it themselves. It can

only be borne by men of the brahmin caste; and to the poor of that order, who gain a livelihood by the reputation of sanctity, and to whom one place is as good as another, their trade obtaining them food and drink wherever they go, perhaps such a trip is little more than idleness. They exact whatever they wish from every village; and the poor mountaineers, credulous and ignorant, think it sinful to refuse them.

A native of Egároo begged charity from me, on the plea of a faquir having taken all he possessed from him some days before: "and because I had no money to give him," said he, "he insisted on having my ear-rings."—"Why did you part with them?" I asked. "He was a faquir: what could I do?" was the reply. I was amused by the manner in which this man coloured the indignity of begging. He brought me a number of walnuts, and, placing them before me, said his children had sent them as a present, and hoped I would eat them for their sakes. He turned the conversation with great ingenuity to faquirs, and told me the tale of his robbery with a careless air; then cracking a walnut, and offering it to me, when he

thought he had won my interest, hoped I would give him something to replace his ear-rings, without which he felt quite uncomfortable.

Suchi is situated in the midst of snowy hills: it stands a great height above the river, and on the lower end of the ridge, which runs nearest to the outer barrier, between it and the Jumna: Linga is the name of the hindermost range, and Ralla the snow-capped peak in front.

June 8th.—From Suchi, four hours brought us to the first village on the Ganges, Mookba. It is on the right bank of the river, and immediately opposite Dorali. We had passed over a good road, for within the limits of the wall we conquered yesterday, we have found “a happy valley,” compared with most that we have passed. Between this village and Dorali, a few days ago, there was a bridge; but the water having suddenly risen, it was swept away: it consisted merely of planks passed from this side to an island of sand in the centre, and thence to the opposite shore. The bed of the river must be at least four hundred yards broad: it has many islands in it, round which the water rushes with great rapidity

and apparent depth. The communication between these two villages being thus interrupted, has caused a great deal of trouble, and obliged me to remain longer than I proposed, to obtain supplies of grain for five or six days. The brahmins of Mookha declare that they have not meal enough in the village for ten men, and have been shouting all day long to the opposite side, for the zemindar to send some over: as they do not seem very anxious to serve us, and the distance round is six miles, by a bridge three miles higher up the stream, I must submit with all the patience I can.

I am assailed in the mean time with the cries of hunger on one side, and the lies of hypocrisy on the other. The brahmins, who are ever the most difficult to deal with, pretend to serve me with the utmost anxiety, and strive to avoid parting with an ounce of flour. The appetites of men who can devour a man, are not easily controlled, and I have slipped them on the pursuit. It has had the desired effect, and much more than requisite has been produced; while my servants assure me there is yet abundance of



"corn in Egypt."—The addition of eighty people to a small population, may however, have the effect of creating an apprehension of famine, if it should not reduce them to that state itself; so I cannot wholly blame them for withholding a supply. I cannot give them credit either for acting only from self-preservation; for laziness, I fear, is the first grand cause of their objection. It is a little barefaced to answer, "We are brahmins, and have no land: there is a zemindar a day's journey from us;" while the corn is cutting down before our eyes, and the water-mill turning with deafening noise within our hearing.

I cannot, from my experience at Mookba, withdraw my condemnation of the mountain priests. They are as dirty and ignorant as their brothers whom I have already celebrated for eminence in those qualities; and their women "out-Herod Herod." There is one man, however, in this village, who can write and read: he was educated at Barahat, where there once was a school; but I fear the schoolmaster found himself too little appreciated to be tempted to

continue his vocation. He is a shrewd knave, and has had the advantage of travelling a little: he has been in the valley of the Dhoon—a great event! and I have begged him to guide us to Gungoutri. He writes on the bark of a tree, the Boji Putta, well known throughout India as the inner covering of Hookah snakes; and it makes a capital substitute for paper. The trees are in great quantity hereabouts; and as the bark is peeled off in large sheets, it requires no preparation, nor is it necessary to have a peculiar pen to write with, as is the case with leaves that are still used for that purpose in the East.

The natives of Ceylon as yet employ no paper: they write on thin leaves of the Ola, and are obliged to make use of an iron pen, which they support in a notch cut in the thumb-nail of the left hand, allowed to grow for such purpose: a literary man is discovered by such a mark. A quill or a reed serves my friend of Mookba, for the pen runs as quickly over the skin of the Boji as it would over the surface of a glazed sheet. I know I am not relating any thing new

in mentioning this truly natural paper; for I believe the word *liber*, a book, was derived from the custom of using a similar one.

I have been very much surprised to find several deaf and dumb children in this village: I have seen five boys and one man so afflicted, and the brahmin tells me there are as many more in Dorali, in the same state. They attribute it, as they do every calamity out of the common course, to drinking the snow-water. It is not easy to adopt such a conclusion, if one may presume they were born so.

The manner of keeping infants asleep, by laying them under a trickling rill which falls gently upon the head, common in the Sirmoor range of hills, might possibly produce that effect, were it practised here: it is here, however, too cold for such a method. A refractory person has frequently been restored to order in England by the cooling discipline of a pump; but I do not know whether the restlessness of a babe could be safely overcome by cradling it under a spout. In these mountains, children, so lulled to sleep, grow up to be stout and hardy men and women.

I do not insinuate, however, that the penal code of an English nursery would be improved by such a process, notwithstanding the amusement that might be derived from the perpetual play of well-arranged shower-baths over the screaming pets of a large family.

The parents of the dumb youths call them idiots, and say they are good for nothing. The expressions of their countenances belie that character: they appear to me to be lively and inquisitive to a degree—qualities that fools never possess. The want of power in the parents to express their wishes in any other way than by speech, is rather the cause of their uselessness than imbecility. "He is a fool—he cannot speak," they say, with a shrug of contempt; and certainly they are right to set such store by speech, for it is the only thing that raises them above the level of brutes. The father of one of the lads—a handsome boy, with a large black eye—complained that he could not even depend on his tending the cattle; for he would frequently sit on the wildest crag, and seem to care for nothing, watching the sun when it set, as the



sacred spot, which none can dare to penetrate without an attendant spirit from Mookba. Dorali, the opposite village, is situated on the banks of the river, in a recess made by a cleft in the mountain, down which a torrent of water falls, apparently direct from the snows of Sri Kanta, the peak of which rises like a marble pyramid above it. Thick forests of pine extend from the water to the skirts of the frozen region, and water rushes down to the river from the heights around, growing into large streams before it reaches it. As I have arranged my commissariat to be supplied for as many days as we shall be absent from the hum of men, to-morrow we mean to reach the celebrated Cow's Mouth; and we have a large tribe of pilgrims in our train.

## CHAPTER III.

Bhairo Ghati—The Cow's Mouth—The Jemna and the Ganges—  
 — Ridge of mountains—Sacred memorials—Customs of travellers—Preservation of monuments—The saint, Bhairo—  
 Journey to Gangotri—Course of the river—Foaming cataracts—  
 Dangerous situation—Gangotri—Hindoo superstition—Devotees  
 paid to the Ganges—A prophet outwitted—Appetition—  
 Death by starvation—Brahmins, or Pandits—Hindoo worship—  
 Endurance of torture—Trial of fortitude—Self-devoted victims—  
 Mourning legend—Sacred hill—Famine—A miracle—  
 Salvation of Gangotri—The goddess Parvati—View from  
 Gangotri—Sacred head of the Ganges—Forbidden food—  
 Bhairo Ghati—Flock of sheep

JUNE 9th.—We have at length gained the mysterious precincts of the Holy River. Bhairo Ghati, below which we are encamped, is three hours' walk from Mookba: midway between it and that village we crossed a bridge to the left bank of the river, and by a tolerable path ar-

rived at this ghat, from which we descended to another bridge about thirty yards long, and as many in height above the stream. We are placed on a little pinnacle, just large enough to contain the party, and over-looking the confluence of the Jahnavi with the Bhagirathi.

Bhairo Ghati is a place of great sanctity, from its being perhaps the last height a pilgrim had to reach, ere he descended to the grand object of adoration, the Cow's Mouth. To me it proved a place of great pleasure, for it introduced to me the first gooseberries I have seen since I left England: there are close to my present situation a great number of them, as well as currants. It is simple, perhaps, to turn from such a celebrated spot to contemplate a gooseberry-bush! but the native of the northern hemisphere prefers his own little star to the bright constellation of the southern cross!

Legends say, (so my brahmin guide informs me,) that once there was no road beyond this, and here concluded the toils of the pilgrim. The rock, which has little more remarkable in it than a cavity apparently worn by the water, once joined a neighbour on the other side, and formed



an arch, very little above the surface of the stream: then it resembled the mouth of a cow, and was worshipped from the opposite shore of the Jahnavi. As nothing could be seen beyond it, the river was supposed to issue from the mouth; and so great a miracle merited suitable devotion: an earthquake probably divided it, if ever it were joined, and, the veil being rent, a more holy spot was discovered. The Bhagirathi flows from the south, and the Jahnavi from the east. To a common observer, one has as much claim to be the true Ganges as the other: of the same width and colour, and apparently the same depth, and running with equal rapidity between similar channels of rocky mountains.

It is surprising to see rivers so great a size, so near their probable sources. At the point of their junction the bed is fully sixty yards broad, and the Ganges, as far as visible, is between twenty and thirty. So late as 1803, so little was known of this place, that it was believed, from the report of a native, to be narrow enough to be leaped over: it could be done by no common-limbed mortal.

The rivers rush towards each other with tre-

mendous noise and swiftness, meeting at right angles, and sweeping away to the west; receiving from the mountains around many tributary streams. I passed over a deep chasm in a rock this morning by a narrow plank, at the bottom of which ran a brook of eighteen or twenty feet in width. The scenery around is wild: no hills are visible beyond those which immediately bound the river, save a snowy ridge called Mallorca, to the north-west. The peaks of the nearest are of rough and ragged rocks, with now and then a patch of snow in their crevices. Their bases, for about a hundred feet from the water, are formed of overhanging crags, worn into almost every shape by the friction of the river: magnificent pine-trees grow on the brows of the hills, and shoot like tall masts from the clefts of the projecting cliffs.

When large masses of stone are disunited from the mountains, (for many lie scattered around, as though placed there by the shock of an earthquake, for sometimes such convulsions do occur,) pine-trees spring up to a great size upon them, without the least appearance of earth to nourish them. A mighty pyramid of stone stands behind my tent, that has evidently fallen from a

great height ; for the space it occupied above is visible, with the trees it brought with it in its descent, green and flourishing about it.

Soon after we quitted Mookha we began to meet the cairns that the pilgrims have piled up in commemoration of their labours. They are numberless beyond belief, and placed in the most whimsical positions. Some are exposed with a degree of ostentation in the midst of the path, each carefully erected, and large enough to pass for the tomb of a hero ; while others are met unexpectedly in the deep shade of the woods, indifferently arranged, and unlikely to last.

You may trace the spirit of the pilgrim in the manner of leaving this anonymous chronicle of his feat. Sometimes I have seen these pillars perched on the branches of trees, and concealed in the hollow of a decayed trunk. They rise from the almost inaccessible crags, where to place them seems scarcely in the human power, and rest in some fissure of a chasm, through which a cataract tears, that to look at puts "toys of desperation" in the brain. However vain the memorial may be to the labourer who erects it, it stamps the spot with a holiness, in the eyes of those who

follow, which fails not to have due effect on their minds. The Hindoos were not able to contain themselves; they had anticipated every thing that was wonderful, but these countless traces of devout men confounded them indeed. "*Wah! Wah!*" with their hands upraised, and their eyes turned to heaven; "*Wah! Wah!*" was all that they could find breath to utter.

No custom is more universal than that of travellers to distant regions or remarkable places, leaving some proof of their performance behind them; and the least pompous and absurd is the nameless method I have described. There is something ludicrous in the extreme in the name of "John Giles" on the apex of the pyramid. I had the good fortune to see this illustrious individual, with his coat off, chiselling that sonorous title upon the highest point of the great one of Ghizeh. "I am determined it shall last," said Mr. Giles, as he dug the letters an inch deep into the stone. What a glorious spirit! When many generations more shall have passed away, and the pyramid looks over a new world, what antiquarian will tolerate for a moment the uncertainty of Cheops, in the face of the recorded

existence of John Giles! Inscribing names upon sacred edifices, pillars, and even statues, may deface them, to be sure: but what argues that, when some future traveller will be taught that they were visited by a Mister Somebody before he was born! Piling up stones perhaps would be an inconvenient substitute for such a custom, although men of taste might devise many elegant structures that would improve the surrounding scenery: and no one could object to their writing their names upon their own altars. I have frequently lamented that no public-spirited people have suggested a method of preserving monuments from injury, without depriving the world of the means of learning who visited them!

When I visited Pompey's Pillar, without the walls of Alexandria, some years ago, I was anxious to see the inscription upon its pedestal, that had transferred it to Diocletian as the proper owner, and sought for it in vain. What I had always been taught to consider granite, seemed suddenly changed to marble. A British ship of war had put into the bay a few days before, and some of the officers were kind enough to ascertain the exact height of the pillar; they painted the

shaft and base of it white,—and in black letters, that reached from top to bottom of the counn, declared that the crew of His Majesty's ship—— had fixed the altitude of the pillar at 94 feet some inches! Then followed the commander's name, and much more in most legible English, that made the Greek hide its diminished head. A virtuoso would have gone distracted; and had it not been for laughter, we might also have raged. I never expected to find myself at the mouth of the Nile, while writing of the source of the Ganges. It is time indeed to return!

Bhairo, a saint after whom the Ghat, which signifies a pass in a mountain, or the quay on a river, is named, was a devoted follower of the Ganges, and by his intercession with his master, many miracles were performed: he is, therefore, worshipped as becomes a person of such influence. A little above the river, in a cluster of pines, and on the road to Gungoutri, is a temple dedicated to his service, at which all devout passengers make their prostrations and circumambulations. Immediately above the river, from the face of a rock, trickles a little stream of a yellow colour,

impregnated perhaps with iron: it flows for the distance of a few yards only, drying the ground and stones about it. It is considered miraculous, and every pilgrim takes a small quantity of the earth away, deeming himself happy in having about him two such precious talismans as Bhairo's clay and the water of Gungoutri. Many of the people bathed in this part of the river; but I thought the water too cold to make the experiment. The thermometer, however, was much higher than at Juntoutri in the bed of the stream: here it was 44 degrees.

June 10th.—At daylight we commenced our long-looked-for expedition to the mysterious object of so much extraordinary devotion—Gungoutri. It is about six miles from Bhairo Ghati; and the road, for the first half of it, is extremely good, winding round the mountains on the right bank of the river, sometimes passing a plain covered with fern, and through forests of pine. The channel, till within two miles of the holy spot, is formed of rocky mountains; many of their peaks covered with snow, and some so rugged as not to retain it. They rise to a great

height, and seem like detached rocks hanging in the sky, their summits are so little connected with each other. In some places they approach their banks so nearly, as to give a very narrow vent for the river, through which it rushes with immense force; so large a body of water, compressed into a space of twenty feet, requires the resistance of the giant boundary that confines it.

When about two miles from Gungoutri, the channel widens considerably, and the bed of the river at the reputed head itself must be at least one hundred yards in breadth. The stream, which is increasing every day, does not occupy more than a third of it, leaving a large track of gravel uncovered on its right bank. The water not only preserves the sandy colour it has in the plains, but darkens as we draw towards its source. Many of the streams that fall into it, from the peaks around, are as deep in their colour, and appear rather to proceed from some foul cavern than from such pure birth-places, where the snow can scarcely yet be said to have caught "one stain of earth!"

The noise with which the cataracts around



rush into the river, some of them leaping with one spring over frightful precipices, and throwing a thick mist from the spray above them, gives a perfect imitation of the music of Niagara. From about twenty miles below Gungoutri, the mountains appear to vie with each other, which shall yield the largest tribute to the master stream. It made me giddy to look upon the scene. In whatever direction I turned my eyes, they were met by a general whirl of water; and when passing over the bed of a torrent by a narrow plank, I found myself forced to bend my head down, lest the universal vertigo should extend to it, and draw me, in substance as well as feeling, into its wild career!

I received a lesson, soon after we left Bhairo Ghati, that has made me thus cautious. A singular chasm is riven in the rock close to that place, about twenty feet wide, and two hundred deep—running perpendicularly to the stream which foams fearfully beneath it. The plank, of about a foot broad, which was placed across it, was wet with the dew; and one side of the rock being higher than the other, there was a gentle descent. When I had reached half way over,

keeping a jealous eye on the rushing waters below, (for however dangerous to look on them, there is a fascination in the torrent that not only fixes the gaze, but seems to draw you towards it,) my foot slipped, and I found myself clinging to the plank. The nerves were too much braced by the danger to fail, and I succeeded in sitting upon it. It would be difficult to picture my ludicrous situation, while debating how I should get out of the scrape. There was nothing within reach on either side—and nobody could come to assist me. There I was, like Mahomet's coffin, swinging between heaven and earth. The plank barely fitted its position; and if I had slid down along, I might have drawn it from its support, and ridden upon it to the bottom. It was positively necessary to rise and walk across. With what envy I thought of Madame Sacchi! I fancied my shoes were the cause of my dilemma; and after several attempts, succeeded in transferring them to my pockets. It then became an easier feat to rise, and I gained *terra firma* in safety. Many a secure position is sufficiently uncomfortable. I was very safe while bestriding my bridge; but

it was impossible to remain there. I felt almost inclined to let "I dare not wait upon I would," like the poor cat in the adage, convinced that the *premier pas* was to be also the *dernier*.

The prospect of being some years hence, perhaps, exhibited as a petrefaction found in the Himalaya, was a posthumous fame that had no temptation for me, and I screwed my courage to the task. A river as wide as the Thames at Windsor running over an uninterrupted bed higher than the crater of Mount *Ætna*, (for Gungoutri is nearly thirteen thousand feet above the level of the sea,) would be an interesting object if it had no other claim upon the mind; but the traveller must feel almost disposed to overlook that in the extraordinary scenes that he is destined to witness acted on it. It is impossible to survey this fountain of credulity, to enter this focus of human folly, without feeling as much wonder and astonishment, as the sight of it can inspire devotion and awe, in the victims of its superstition, who toil through so many hardships, to bathe in its dirty water.

Here every extravagance that the weakness of the human race can be guilty of, seems to be con

centrated :—some, who have been wandering for months to fill their phials at the stream, overcome by the presence of their God, lie prostrate on the banks; others, up to their waists in the water, performing, with the most unfeigned abstraction, all the manœuvres of a Hindoo worship. Under the auspices of brahmins, groups were sitting on several parts of the bank, kneading up balls of sand, with holy grass twisted round their fingers, intended as offerings to the Ganges for the propitiation of their fathers' souls, which when ready they drop into the stream with the most profound and religious gravity. Such faith is placed in its power of performing miracles, that many haunt it for the most ridiculous purposes, convinced that what they ask will be accorded.

At this moment, a fanatic is up to his middle in the river, praying to bestow upon him the gift of prophecy : he has travelled from a village above Sirinagur, never doubting that the Ganges will reward him for his journey, by opening the book of futurity ; and if fools may be inspired to foretell, there is some probability of this pilgrim succeeding in his object, for he is simple indeed.

He will return, he says, a prophet to his native hill, where all will flock to him to have their fortunes told, and he will soon grow rich.

The brahmin, who does not seem credulous or bigoted, but rather disposed to laugh at the devotion paid to the river, boldly declares his doubt in its efficacy in this particular miracle at least. Many men in the mountains have aimed at the fame of soothsayers; and although little can happen to vary the lives of the people, or disturb the even tenor of their days, they are remarkably anxious to learn the destinies that await them. It is indeed the natural sin of man to seek to know more than he is wisely permitted. It was necessary, my brahmin guide tells me—(being behind the curtain, perhaps, he knows too much; like the man who works the puppet, he can scarcely be affected by its movements)—it was necessary to check the wild confidence that was placed in the raving of a prophet, who not long ago possessed amazing fame in the vicinity of Tirhee: and the Rajah, hoping to unmask him, sent for him to the palace. On his assuming his magical position, the Rajah desired him to be

asked if his wife, who was then pregnant, would be delivered of a son or a daughter? "A son," replied the seer, after due muttering and shaking:—"Mighty Rajah! a son."—"Good!" interrupted the prince: "now tell me what are in my hands," taking them from behind his back, and placing them clenched before the eyes of the prophet. After some deliberation, "'There is gold in one, and grain in the other," answered the man. "Lo! they are both empty," exclaimed the Rajah. "Go, you fool—you who cannot tell what my hand contains when close before your eyes, how should you know what is concealed within the womb?" This proved a perfect *coup d'état*, and the future no longer draws the attention of the subjects of 'Tirhee from the present.

As I approached the holy shrine, a troop of pallid spectres glided through the woods before me, and vanished like the images in Banquo's glass. I thought I had reached supernatural regions indeed, till a few more yards brought me to a train of naked faquirs whitened all over with ashes: a rope was coiled round their waists, and their hair hung down to their shoulders,

twisted like serpents; their hands close to their sides, they glided along with measured steps, repeating constantly in a hollow tone, "*Ram! Ram! Ram!*" a Hindoo word for the deity. If it required any thing to heighten the wildness of the scene, these unearthly beings were admirably adapted for it. The firmest sceptic in ghost stories, would have startled to behold one of these inhuman figures rise suddenly before him; and the slightest shade of superstition would be sufficient to blind the eyes of a believer to the reality of such a form, if in the glimmering of the moon one were to be seen perched upon the brow of a precipice, with an arm raised above the head incapable of motion, and the nails hanging in long strings from the back of the clenched hand. If the sight of such an apparition could give rise to fear, the deep sepulchral voice with which the words "*Ram! Ram!*" fell upon the stillness of the night, and resounded from the rocks around, would indeed complete the scene of terror!

At Gungoutri there are several sheds erected for the shelter of pilgrims; and as the evening was far advanced, and a storm brewing, I went into one

of them. It was a long narrow building, and the further end was so wrapped in darkness, that I had been some moments in it before I perceived any thing. I was attracted by a sullen murmur, and went to the spot whence it proceeded. A miserable wretch had just blown a few sticks into a flame; and as the light burst upon his countenance, I unconsciously receded, and had to summon all my fortitude to return to him again. His eyes started from his head, and his bones were visible through his skin: his teeth chattered, and his whole frame shook with cold: and I never saw hair longer or more twisted than his was. I spoke to him, but in vain: he did not even deign to look at me—and made no motion, but to blow the embers into a fresh blaze; the fitful glare of which, falling on his skeleton form, made me almost think that I had descended to the tomb. I found that he had come for the purpose of ending his life by starvation at Gungoutri. Many saquirs have attempted this death, and have lingered on the banks of the river for several days without food. The brahmin, however, assures me that nobody can die in so holy a place; and



to preserve its character for being unconnected with mortality, the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages take care they should not, and bear them by force away, and feed them, or at any rate give them the liberty to die elsewhere.

A small temple marks the sacred source of the river, and immediately opposite is the orthodox spot for bathing in and filling the phials, which, when ready, receive the stamp of authenticity from the seal of the brahmin, who wears it as a ring upon his finger—it bears the following inscription engraved upon it—"The water of the Bhagrathi, Gungoutri." Without such mark the water would not be deemed holy by the purchasers in the plains.

The brahmins, or pundabs, as they are called in the hills, of this river, drive a very profitable trade. Every pilgrim, with the exception of the mendicants, pay them something for their attendance; and the rich, who often send for the water when they need a charm, send also handsome presents. I observed that these holy personages were much more active in collecting their contributions than in administering to the

spiritual comfort of those about them. Some of my servants, who promised to give them money when they returned to their tents, could hardly obtain a prayer upon credit: they came to me in a body, with the brahmin at their head, to beg my security for their fees; and, on my granting it, bargained with as much clamour and earnestness as they would have done for a temporal purchase, for the price they were to pay for the services of the high-priest of the Ganges. It was fixed at last according to their situations and wages, although the brahmin exhorted them gravely to remember that the great merit lay in self-denial, and giving merely what they could afford was idle and wicked.

I was not able to witness the mystery of their worship, for they protested against my passing beyond the porch of the temple. The sanctum seemed close and unpromising, and I had no desire to pollute it by my touch. It was a busy scene: and although I have always been deeply impressed by the air of poetry that hangs about every thing connected with Arabia, I must admit that I view with greater interest the uncouth, nay,

unnatural objects that heighten the awe of this place, than I did the patient caravan of pilgrims toiling over the desert to Mecca : the silence of the scenes, though the solitude may, cannot bear comparison. In the mountains you can never be wholly quiet : in the desert I have fancied that I could hear the motion of the air ! and once on an afternoon, while lying under the shelter of a rock, no being within sight, I was startled by the noise a vulture made in closing its beak, when perched upon a crag many yards from me !

The comfort my followers obtained, with the advantage they hoped to reap, by their prayers and ablutions at Gungoutri, put them in such good spirits, that they would have followed me to the snows of Kedar Nath. The mention of that place of suffering is enough to make the coldest Christian shudder. A melancholy delusion leads the naked and frequently innocent Hindoo to brave the severest torture that the frame of man can possibly be subject to, with a fortitude that would place him in a rank with the most illustrious of martyrs, were it exercised in a good cause. They wander for miles with almost a light spirit — overcoming hardships at every step that might

entitle them to be canonised—to crown their labours and to close their days in hunger, and in cold that early mortifies their limbs! Crowds have passed from Gungoutri to that mountain (the journey is about four days,) and have never more been heard of. Some have been known to repent when yet near enough to return, and have perished from their tortures beneath a jutting rock, their extremities withered, and their pains increased by the contempt and execration of all who pass them, and the keener stings of their consciences, which upbraid them with want of faith, and prospect of damnation! They have an idea that none can find the path to return by, unless rejected by Heaven. “A very great crime,” said my brahmin guide, “will induce them to encounter this death.”—“What crime do you consider sufficient to need such an atonement?” I asked. “Killing a brahmin or a cow,” was his immediate answer—a strange association; but they are both held in equal veneration, and not unfrequently the cow is most deserving of it of the two. She does not, at any rate, seek to have such a doctrine believed.

It does not follow that a full pardon is accorded to the self-devoted victim. They imagine that the elect are permitted to reach a high peak called Brigoo, from which they throw themselves down to a bottomless abyss, across which a sharp stone, projecting from the mountains, passes: should they fall astride upon it, and be equally divided, they are forgiven: other modes of being cut imply a slight punishment. As the frost soon seizes upon them, none who have reached any distance in the snow ever return: thence the belief that there is no road back for the accepted. Those who tremble on the verge, perish, as I have said, should they escape being stoned to death by the nearest villagers, who believe such sinful beings would bring curses on them.

Kedar Nath is fancied by the natives to have some resemblance to a buffalo, and to that circumstance I believe owes a great portion of its character for sanctity. It was once an animated being, and unfortunately had a quarrel with a powerful giant of the name of Bheem Singh. To revenge itself upon him it assumed the shape of a buffalo, of no ordinary dimensions, and rushed at

its enemy with its utmost violence. The wary Bheem Singh, however, bestrode the narrow hills like a Colossus, and seemed to give the beast an opportunity of running between his legs; but when midway, closed them upon it, and divided it in two: the head and shoulder became Kedar Nath, while its hind quarters settled somewhere in the kingdom of Nepaul, and figure at this moment as one of the loftiest mountains in it. So much for mountain legends. It surely was an easy matter to rule a race of people who could believe such clumsy tales as these! The inventors of such fables had a most encouraging credulity in those for whom they were conceived.

I do not know, however, that the freaks attributed to Krishna are a bit more absurd than the more classical ones of which Apollo was the hero. A calamba tree on the shore of the Jumna, near Bunderbund, still bears the impression of Krishna's back; for he leaned upon it when he played his pipe to the milkmaids, with whom he passed so merry a time; and one of them, who bore the pretty name of Toolsi, (another Daphne,) was turned, while endeavouring to escape his pursuit,

into that plant which is still called from her the Toolsi, Holy Basil.

There is a hill in the neighbourhood of this sacred place, which bears a holy character, and is at times illuminated and visited from afar for the purpose of worship. In a season of scarcity, the people complained to Krishna, who recommended them to propitiate with offerings the god of this mountain, "Goverdhana." They obeyed, and he, assuming another figure, sat on the summit of it to receive their offerings, which must have been of food; for he presently grew so heavy, that the hill bent under him, and to the present day retains the shape his sudden increase gave to it.

The natives esteem the saquirs highly; and many are learned, and perfectly sincere. They pass over the villages like a cloud of locusts, consuming every thing. It is unlawful to injure, and irreligious not to feed them. The brahmin assures me, that once, no less a number than ten thousand arrived at Sirinagur on one day, and claimed to be fed. Although his assertion is a little too bold to be implicitly believed, I have no

doubt there were enough to cause, as he declares, the apprehension of a famine. The Rajah, afraid of his stores being exhausted, was anxious to get rid of them, and offered each man a certain quantity of grain if they would scatter themselves about the mountains, and not move in so formidable a train. They refused the offer, and, insisting upon being served according to their appetites, established themselves in a body in the town.

They are bound to have no pleasures, and to close their ears and eyes to all gratifications. The Rajah, pretending to tolerate them, as they were assembled at their meal, ordered all the musicians and dancing-girls that could be collected, to assail them with their blandishments, and on no account to relax from the music and the dance, till, scandalised by the scene, they were driven from the city. This *ruse* had the desired effect: fearing that their sanctity might be impeached by witnessing so profane an exhibition, they fled with the utmost precipitation.

Some faquirs have been known to have performed miracles; “but I do not believe much of



that," continued the brahmin, for he is the most persevering story-teller I ever listened to, and sits in my tent as long as I please to allow him to edify me. "I do not believe much in that, for indeed I never witnessed a man but once, who could work a miracle. A naked saquir came to the village where I was born, and asked me to be his guide to Gungoutri. He refused food, for he said he could feed himself whenever he felt hungry. 'Take your stick,' said he, 'and leave the rest to me.' 'To you?' I answered, 'why, you are a beggar! what can you give me?' He had nothing with him but the dried gourd, from which he drank water. He looked angry, and repeating, '*Ram! Ram!*' desired me to set forth. When we reached Bhairu Ghati, he bade me wait at the temple while he bathed; and on his coming up to it, asked if I was hungry, and what I would like to have: 'Some cakes of flour,' I replied. In a few moments after he had prayed, the ground was spread with cakes. He performed the same miracle at Gungoutri—on that very spot," pointing to the front of the adjoining shed. "I do not lie, for

I saw it with my own eyes, and eat the cakes ; and very good they were."—" I do not lie, like Mr. Mathews' Longbow," was the invariable summing-up of every story he told ; and it frequently offered a fair presumption why a verdict of ' guilty ' should be recorded against him.

The situation of Gungoutri is sufficiently provoking. The river rather widens above it, and nothing can be traced by the eye that will justify a conjecture of its distance from the source. There is no road beyond ; and, with all the effort possible, I question whether a traveller could penetrate much more than a mile further. The river about a quarter of a mile beyond Gungoutri winds to the east, towards the high mountain of the Rudru Himmaleh, in which it is believed to have its source. One peak of this mountain is visible from here ; that which contains the fountain of the Ganges. The Hindoos suppose that from each peak of the Rudru a river flows, and consider it (for it has several peaks) the birth-place of the most esteemed ones in the Himalaya. It is a species of Olympus too ; and while looking at it through a telescope, I was interrupted

to know if I could see the goddess Parbutti standing in a flowing robe on its height.

I delivered my glass to the brahmin, and he passed it to others; but their unpractised eyes could not even see the mountain; and they marvelled at our different organization, in being able to discern clearly objects which the same instrument made dark to them. Some former traveller had, to amuse the brahmin, declared he could see the goddess; and so convinced is he of the possibility, that I am sure he will not be staggered by my affirming she was not visible. "It was a dark day," he said; and indeed clouds were gathering fast around the hills.

Although the Ganges flows with equal rapidity generally, and sometimes with much greater than the Jumna, it forms no cataracts, but passes over a wide bed, excepting at Bhairo Ghati, where it is compressed into a narrow bound; and, without any other impediment, chafes with considerable fury. From Hurdwar to the sea, the distance is, in miles, thirteen hundred: what the height of the former is in feet above the level of the latter. The great fall of the Ganges therefore is from the

source to the place of entering the plains ; from Gungoutri it has to descend at least twelve thousand feet, in a comparatively short distance, not more perhaps than sixty miles, estimating by its windings. It is fortunate therefore the boundary is so formidable : so great a body of water, running at such a rate, would soon sweep light obstacles away.

When the pilgrims bathe, (and they stand in the centre of the stream,) it reaches to the waist of a common-sized man ; and the brahmin tells me that it preserves the same depth as far as he has been able to penetrate, about a mile higher. The snowy range is not visible from this spot nor any very high mountains, with the exception of the Rudru, which is twenty-three thousand feet above the level of the sea : a ridge slightly sprinkled with snow, called Deoghat, which seems to meet the hills on the left bank, at the point where the Rudru closes the scene, is the only material one in sight.

After scrambling, with very little advantage, up the precipitous banks that bound the river above Gungoutri, I resolved to abandon any hopes

is reaching beyond the imaginary and sacred head of the Ganges. It is indeed quite far enough way to answer the devout purpose to which it is consecrated: it requires no little labour to get it, and possesses the appearance of mystery to a sufficient degree to satisfy the minds that are so predisposed to believe its merits. As the world has grown more wicked, so the trials have increased in difficulty. In the golden age, it was a light and easy matter to worship at the source: for it then, my brahmin guide relates, rose at Benares. A more sinful age had to follow it to Hurdwar. From the vice of a third it receded to Barahat; and the fourth is doomed to trace it, through the Cow's Mouth, to the heights of Gungoutri, where I hope it may be content to remain, for the sake of those who propose to suffer in its cause.

On returning to our tent to dinner, after having been so deeply engaged, and so much initiated in the superstitions of the place, I could scarcely avoid startling when I perceived we were to eat the forbidden food—a piece of salt beef smoked upon the board. Profaning Gun-

goutri by devouring a part of the sacred animal ! nothing could have been less in accordance with the spirit of the place. I observed the brahmin cast a curious eye towards the joint, and mutter something with a horrid face as he left the tent. We expected to see him return with his enraged followers ; and, like harpies, pounce upon the table. He could not, however, conceive any thing so iniquitous as the deliberate slaughter of a cow, and gave us the credit of having, like himself, a taste for the flesh of a superannuated ram. I overheard one of the Mahometans say, " they are eating goats' flesh ; " which denoted that some little doubt had been entertained regarding our propensities.

The holy water was not calculated to purify our persons from such a pollution. It requires the fullest faith in its efficacy to be able even to swallow it : the sediment is so great, that after straining it five or six times, we were obliged to abandon the trial, and gave additional cause to those concerned in our welfare to despair, when we sent a pitcher to the clearest brook that fell from the nearest hills.

We at length retraced our steps to Bhairu Ghati, passing the tracks of several bears, and occasionally obtaining a distant view of some of them. They afforded us no adventure, however, and I did not think even scientific curiosity would perfectly justify an intrusion upon their privacy, at least to them. We ascertained that they were white, and imagined they were like other bears of the same colour. We caught distant glimpses also of the musk deer. I was more anxious to have had a closer inspection of them; but it was too difficult to follow, to hope to overtake. A man of Suchi undertook to snare one; but he had had no success when we left that place. We encamped on the same point above the two rivers.

There is a road a little below Bhairu Ghati, that breaks off from the right bank of the Ganges to Nielung, a village on the frontier of Oondesh, the country of the shawl-wool goat. It is about four days' journey over a steep and rugged way, at present much covered with snow, which, with the prospect of heavy rains falling immediately, must prevent our attempting to

reach it. I met several merchants, natives of the province of Bisehur, returning from it, driving a flock of sheep, bearing loads from thirty-five to forty pounds each. The burdens were swung in bags over their backs, without any cords to bind them on ; and they moved up the steep crags, with the greatest nimbleness and indifference to the weight. It is very rare to find a sheep a beast of burden ; it is not uncommon, however, here : in this case, they were the bearers of their masters' food, and were natives of the northern part of the mountains ; a larger race than the common animals of the hills. They are used for trade, and are made to carry grain from a fertile to a less happy quarter. They travel with surprising quickness, and are kept together without the least trouble. No four-footed animals but goats and sheep could be used for such a purpose in any part of the mountains ; and the former being too apt to roam, perhaps the latter are the only ones that could be safely turned to such account



## CHAPTER IV.

Spasmodic attack—Singular picture—Return to Mookba—  
 Imaginary complaints—Remains of a temple—Inscriptions  
 —Heavy rain—Scene of confusion—Ludicrous picture—  
 Comfortless situation—An encampment—Whimsical scene  
 —A stormy night—Effects of the rains—Arrival at Doung-  
 gu—Return to Tsurou—Change of temperature—Apricot-  
 oil—Opium—Temple to Mahaleo—Agriculture—Monkey  
 depredations—Cruel amusement—Turning the tables—  
 Scenery of the Ganges—Civility of the natives—Eastern  
 customs—Unexpected meeting—How to get rid of a bear—  
 Fields of rice—Music and singing—Complimentary stanzas  
 —A picture—Dignity of travel—Mal-a-propos meetings.

JUNE 12th.—I had observed rain gathering  
 very fast for some days about the top of every  
 mountain,

On whose barren breast  
 Labouring clouds do often rest—

and did not feel disposed, in consequence, to lin-  
 ger in the neighbourhood of avalanches and tor-  
 rents longer than necessary ; so, having erected

our remembrances at Bhairo Ghati, as we had done at Gungoutri, with becoming solemnity, set out for the village of Mookba.

On the most difficult part of the road, I had too good a reason for discovering that the precincts of the holy place are not free from "the ills that flesh is heir to," any more than a more profane spot. My brother was seized with a spasmodic attack, resembling the cholera morbus so nearly, that I was terrified lest I should have to watch a sick bed in that desolate region. My train was instantly thrown into consternation, and the brahmin affected to pray, and assured me there was high need, for no persons recovered from such a disease. His bed was spread beneath the shadow of numberless pine-trees, on a sloping bank, and I had him covered with as many blankets as could be collected, and rubbed incessantly, till the medicine-chest arrived: half a wine-glass of brandy and laudanum, equally mixed, had the effect of restoring him to ease. I had seen this dose administered in the hospitals; and as it was given very few minutes after the commencement of the at-

and I believe it had the effect of keeping what might through heat have proved fatal.

As the night soon wanted a reformative, I had time to observe our situation: a circle was formed round us as perfect as the stars would permit, of the most serious faces I ever beheld,—their expressions divided between fear for the patient and amazement at the doctor—the bed with a blanket supported on spars for a canopy, in the centre—and a little removed from the bedstead sitting his head with alarm, gravity and indignance. My servants held a consultation by the pillow of the patient, in which a goat and a game-cock had contrived to be included: many things were suggested by the solemn concclave, and I think they were all adopted in their turn.

There are few scenes so sad as not to possess something of the ludicrous, and the invalid himself could not avoid smiling at the novel and whimsical discipline he was likely to be placed under. A exile in the mountains would make no unentertaining subject for a caricature. We had no room for our tents near the hospital we had so

hastily established, and were obliged to move forward; a hammock was arranged in a very few minutes, by fastening a shawl to a tent-pole, and the patient was carried to a clear space about a mile further on the road, where we remained a day and night.

June 13th.—At noon we began our walk to Mookba, and reached it just in time to escape the first fall of rain. It promises, from the time it has been brewing, to continue for several days; and the natives declare it will prevent our moving beyond Suchi for at least a week. It will be impossible indeed to cross that tremendous pass until the rocks have lost the increased facility of slipping that the water is likely to give them; and our greatest apprehension of going barefooted may happen to be realised, when, even in dry weather, we leave a portion of our shoes upon the pointed stones of every day's journey.

I found the same of my cure had preceded me, and all the "*malades imaginaires*" of Mookba assembled round my tent to beg a prescription. They recounted, with doleful faces,

the sad stories of their sufferings : some had had head-aches for years, and some had lost their appetites since they were children. I had to examine fingers and feet, and to administer something to each : for external complaints, I recommended the simple lotion of cold water, which was too much neglected and too little esteemed ; for, as in other parts, they preserved their predilection for dirt on the banks of the Holy River, in spite of its power of purification. As the inward complaints seemed to me to be nearly alike, I had one invariable panacea, and sent my patients away congratulating themselves on meeting with so able a physician, convinced of my skill, as they appeared delighted with the uniformity of my practice : for every man held his pill between his finger and thumb ; and comparing it with his neighbour's before he swallowed it, chuckled at the resemblance.

As we entered the village, a party of pilgrims, among whom were a woman and several children, drew up on a bank to the right of the pathway and saluted us with groans. I could not conjecture what difference of opinion had made us

liable to such a public expression of unpopularity ; and approaching them, I found each person pressing his hand on his stomach, and making faces that soon explained to me the state of affairs. They had been unaccustomed to such cold water and coarse grain, and all stood in need of my assistance. I astonished these wanderers by my ability, as I had confounded the residents. I have become very weary, however, of this fashionable rage after my nostrums ; and for the purpose of soon emptying my boxes, I distributed the medicine with a lavish hand. I shall be able to sympathize with the doctor, whose celebrity prevents his having a moment to himself, and whose time is often consumed in cases as trifling and ridiculous as mine. I am afraid also I can approach too nearly to the feelings of the quack, who, while he gulls the credulous fools who attend him, is the only one aware of his own ignorance. I trust, however, neither my lotion nor my physic will be followed by mischief.

June 14th. — Within about an hour's walk of Mookba are the remains of a temple. Many fragments of sculptured stone are scattered

about, and the country round bears the appearance of having been inhabited and cultivated, the division of the terraces being still visible. I could learn no clear tradition regarding it; but my brahmin friend attributed its erection to the Chinese. It has been very large, and was placed in a most commanding position on the brow of a hill that overlooks the Ganges, and commands a view of the snowy range: the stone of which it was built was carefully prepared, and bears the marks of having been formed by more skilful artists than the present race of mountaineers can produce. When they talk of China, however, they merely mean people on the other side of the snowy boundary: and as inscriptions in the Tibetan character have been found in the hills, that nation may have been the builders of the temple.

There is much room for speculation in the study of uncouth figures and incomprehensible letters, and much amusement is derived from its exercise, although no light may be thrown upon them. We are prone to admire most what we least understand. We too frequently lose our enthusiasm as we gain our knowledge; and the

traveller, who leaves it to his imagination to read hieroglyphics and form hypotheses, passes his time fully as agreeably, if not more so, than the critic, who, satisfied he knows such things were for such purposes, has no occasion for the aid of conjecture, or the charms of fancy.

About midway between the temple and Mookba the rain began to fall in torrents, and I found we were too likely to bid adieu to the pleasant scenes we had hitherto enjoyed, for the most uncomfortable of all mountain visitations. We appeared to be riding on the bosoms of the clouds. The road became so slippery as to render the utmost caution necessary, and all around was dark. The vivid lightning, that shot through the mist, was the best light we had to depend on; for the clouds hung so completely around us, above, below, and on every side, that we were at length obliged to abandon the continuation of our journey; and taking shelter under an overhanging rock, which rose from the bosom of the hill above us, we remained about a couple of hours. There was no hope of the storm's cessation: and, afraid of being benighted, we



set forth again. It was dark when we reached Suchi; and the tempest had so scattered my party, that I despaired of being housed.

As is generally the case in such predicaments, the things you least require are nearest at hand. With the voice of an Othello I shouted for my tent—for any thing that could be found—nay, even a handkerchief if it could be discovered; but without success. The barking of the dogs, with the screaming of the people to still them—the clamour of the nearest coolies for guides and lights—and the uproar of my servants, with occasional claps of thunder, and the rushing of the rain, made the most bewildering tumult that can be conceived. I had been obliged to strip myself of my wet clothes; and, tying a table-cloth about my waist, (the only cover I could find,) sallied forth with a white staff in my hand; and, like a maniac, as I exercised it upon the flying people, or poked them out of the snug covers they had taken to, added to the wildness of the scene.

Although accustomed from principle, and indeed from inclination, to be as passive as possible under the annoyance of Hindoo apathy, I found

it difficult to control myself here. There was a humour in the uproar, too, that it was not easy to withstand. After calling till I was hoarse for any portion of my baggage that had arrived, apprehending that all had been swept away, to prove that I was not quite destitute, my friend Booth Sing, the most attentive of my coolies, a smart fellow, and a perfect beau in his way, flew in pursuit, and in a few minutes returned, bearing in triumph the trophies of his success—a broken kettle and a frying pan! “This is all,” said he; “but I hope the rest will soon come.” It was impossible not to laugh; and when one of the hillmen suggested a use for the frying-pan, by holding it over his head as an umbrella, and then, transferring it to me, recommended me to apply it to that purpose, the ludicrous appearance I already made, with such a finish to my picture, was enough to restore me to good-humour.

I was a match for any fanatic in the East—standing on a crag, surrounded by the villagers squatting like monkeys at my feet—no covering but the draggled table-cloth about me—a dirty white wand in one hand, and the other holding a

frying-pan over my head ! It was nearly twelve at night before I had collected all that the storm had dispersed. Some of my bearers had fallen, and bruised themselves a good deal ; and one, with a side of my tent, had plumped to the bottom of a pit, from which he contrived to crawl out before midnight ; and, coming terrified to relate his calamity to me, assured me his burden must have by this time reached the centre of the earth, for he had never heard it stop. At length, with three sides only to the tent, we contrived to get under cover ; and sitting in the centre of it, with our feet upon the pole to keep them out of the wet, and a pan of charcoal below, we were able, (thanks to the war of elements !) to pass the night without sleeping. The canvases and the beds had got so completely soaked, that it would not have been either comfortable or safe to have endeavoured to obtain repose.

Daylight brought no alteration in our affairs. and on the evening of the third day of our being weather-bound, every thing seemed as unpromising as the commencement. On sending in search of the stray part of the tent, I found that

the fear of the man had exaggerated the depth of the pit, and it was not very difficult to recover it.

The position in which we are encamped is the usual choice of the pilgrims, and many are seated about us. We have placed the tent under the branches of a very large walnut-tree, from which, the first night, we expected to gain a little shelter; but being now well washed, it acts as a conduit to pour the water more directly upon us; a little behind is the tent of my servants, in which they sit, as miserable as fowls, around a pool in the middle, which the rain, in dropping through the canvass, has formed. / Their wet blankets are wrapped round them; and, notwithstanding the reproaches that their countenances express—for every man seems to say, “Why have you done this?”—I find it impossible to contemplate their situation with the least appearance of gravity.

A small wooden shed, about the size of a wild-beast cage, erected for the use of the saquiras, (three or four men may squat in the middle of it,) is converted into a kitchen; and my Mahometans, drenched to the skin, are endeavouring to cook

my dinner at a little smoke in one corner of it : for it is impossible to kindle a flame. The only saucepan I have remaining, instead of a cover, which, in all probability, like Gilpin's wig, will soon be here—"for why? 'tis on the road"—has a cane hat, the crown of which just fits the mouth, stuffed into it. A species of pottage is manufacturing in a broken pot, into which the rain will intrude ; and water being the last ingredient it requires, promises to render it the most ultra soup-maigre. My cooks have petitioned to bring it into my tent ; and it now boils under the table, that being the driest situation to be found.

I defy the greatest humourist of the day to contrive a more absurd scene than our encampment presents. The faquirs are muttering round their miserable fires, striving to protect their meal from the wet with leaves : some Hindoos are cooking their cakes in the hollow of a tree, which I expect to see rattle about them : and one has just lost his dinner by the roof of his kitchen—a cotton umbrella, flying up into the air with a tin pot hanging from the stick, which had been tied to it in hopes of giving weight.

Every person is anxiously watching this balloon, in its eccentric flight, with his person stretched over his mess, lest it should descend upon it and scatter it to the winds.

What the thoughts of my Hindoos may be I cannot conjecture, but I hope they view their dilemmas as necessary and meritorious trials. My Mahometans, I am convinced by their looks, would sacrifice the chance of Paradise if it were only to be attained through a repetition of such scenes. For myself, I unconsciously break into a whistle of appropriate airs, and detect myself in humming, "Ye gentlemen of England, who live at home at ease," too frequently, not to perceive that it breathes a spirit ill at ease. At night, when the ridiculous of the picture is lost in darkness, every gust of wind threatens to carry my flimsy roof to the clouds—while the thunder echoes from mountain to valley, and valley to mountain, and the flashes of lightning discover the grandeur of the peaks above me, as they thrust their heads through the mist, then shoot through the vapour that hangs over a fathomless abyss before me—masses of rock,

loosened by the rain, fall with tremendous noise down its sides—all is, indeed, magnificent, sublime !

June 17th, 18th.—We had been three days at Suchi, and took a fair opportunity on the fourth to make our escape from the first village within the magic circle of the Ganges' power : we began to fear that we might be affected by its influence, and, spell-bound, be forced to remain till we had mingled with its dust ; for, as long as the rain continued, it was impossible to cross the barrier, the passage of which, in fine weather, had so alarmed my people ; and unless we could learn to relish rams, we had little chance of surviving a season within it—for our flesh, a buck goat ; and for vegetables, the crisped tops of the young forest fern ! The natives of the hills, in many parts, use this as a vegetable ; but on tasting it once, I thought it too insipid and tough to induce me to adopt it.

On reaching the formidable pass, we had all the difficulty and labour we had apprehended. The common road was so slippery, as to render it dangerous ; and on gaining the summit of the

rocks we had ascended, we were forced to pause on the brink, all seemed so altered by the rains of the last few days. The trunks of trees were swinging in the gaps, held only by one twig. The planks had been swept down the chasms they were placed across; and at the bottom of every rock, a pool of water was collected. On shooting down these declivities, we generally splashed into the reservoir below; and when crawling up the next, dragged and miserable, gave an apt representation of the cleanly though uncomfortable punishment of keel-hauling—now, I hope, obsolete.

It took us some time to fasten the ladders, and prepare the bridges; and it was nearly dark when we reached a clear space, on the right bank of the Ganges, where we encamped: the natives named it Dountgul. It was used for the cultivation of red spinach, and stood under a high hill, on which a little village was situated, and many deer were browsing among the trees on its summit. Not long before we came in sight of it, fatigued with our scrambling, we had nearly abandoned the chance of gaining it: in despair



we arrived at the top of a rock almost perpendicular, and fifty feet deep. The only method of descending was by a flat board, resting in a niche at the bottom, and fastened to the root of a tree by a few willow twigs at the top: steps, about big enough for the feet of a monkey, were scooped, at long intervals, in the plank.

We had climbed up by these means, but it was a far different matter to descend. There is an "alacrity in sinking," that made us hesitate for some time to trust ourselves upon it. Our baggage was rolled, as well as it could be, to people who were placed at the bottom to receive it; and we were obliged to take advantage of that precaution for ourselves. When half-way down the plank, we were forced (for we could pick our steps no further) to launch our bodies, stretched on their backs, to the foot, where we were caught in safety, with a shout of applause that would have encouraged a mountebank. Dountgul can scarcely be seven miles from Suchi; but it is equal to a distance of at least fifty, in any other part of the world.

June 19th.—Without any other adventure than

sticking for two or three hours up to our waists in mud, while attempting to pass over a hill of clay, that lay in our route to Tearoo, we reached that village, and pitched upon the same ground that we had occupied when there before. The next day we set off by daylight to traverse a rocky ridge, that separated us from a range, on the green cape of which stands a beautiful cluster of cottages—judging from a distance only—called Paloo. Near it we encamped on a stubble-field, where stood many apricot-trees, the fruit nearly ripe. We crossed over two bare and rocky mountains, or rather chains of mountains; and, descending from the height of the latter nearly perpendicularly, to a torrent that divided it from the one we are now on, we found, on passing it, that the temperature had suddenly changed to that of summer: we left every thing bleak and barren, and, in a few hours only, had been transported to a harvest home! The first crop had been reaped, and the second was sown, and in some parts above the ground.

My followers attacked the apricot-trees like locusts; and it was fortunate that some of the fruit was still unripe, or the natives and owners

of the property would have had to lament our passage through their country. Although a little surprised at the attack, they bore it very good-humouredly; and the remonstrance of an old man, when one of my coolies, too tired to pick the fruit, broke a well-loaded branch off the tree, delivered in the gentlest accent, and with a manner approaching to dignity, not intended for me to hear, struck me very forcibly:—"If the children die, God may give the father others; but if the parent fall, there can be no more offspring: take as much fruit as you please, it will grow again, but do not break the tree."

Throughout all parts of the hills where the apricot thrives, the natives extract an oil from the kernel. A press of the simplest arrangement stands a little without the village, and thither the fruit is carried when ripe, and the stones separated from it. The oil is light-coloured and clear, possessing very little consistency: it does not therefore congeal so rapidly as might be expected in so cold a region. In most of the hills, poppies grow in great number and strength. The inhabitants distil opium, and say they are fond of it, but I never met one in the least degree under

its influence: they cannot send it to the plains, from the positive restriction; they must therefore use it among themselves, but I should think very sparingly indeed. They are very fond of the seed of the poppy; and at the time it is in season, you scarcely meet a person that is not provided with several pods-full.

June 20th.—We are so delighted with the change of scenery, and comparatively level country, that we take very short journeys. To-day we remain at Reithal, which is little more than an hour from Paloo. This village is the best we have met with in the mountains, and the only one in which the people have been anxious that we should remain. It was our intention to have continued to the next, about three miles further; but on our approaching, we were met by the population of the place, with an address of welcome, and a request that we should pitch our tents on a pretty green spot above the village, on one side of which stood a temple to Mahadeo. As the rain still continues throughout the day, commencing a little before noon, we find it necessary to complete our journey at an early hour.

We encamped close to the porch of the temple, where most of the natives have assembled to gaze upon us. The women, too, have ventured to gratify their curiosity more than they have elsewhere done; and, making their hospitality an excuse, have brought milk and fruit to us; and, having presented it, sit down in groups about us, with silent wonder, observing all our motions. The people are not much cleaner than the inhabitants of other parts, although, living in a comparatively warm climate, they might undergo the use of cold water without much inconvenience. It is singular that people, so dirty in their own persons and abodes, should be so particular in all that relates to their agriculture. Their fields are prepared for the grain with the utmost care, and kept as clean as it is possible to keep them during the progress of the crop. The paved area, on which the corn is trodden out, would bear to be placed, for cleanliness, by the side of an English threshing-barn. If the wind blows the smallest impurity upon it, it is immediately swept off, even though no corn be ready to be laid upon it.

The harvest is conducted with great mirth;

singing and music resound in the valleys, and the labour of carrying home the sheaves seems to be perfectly delighted in. Superstition has its power also; for it is necessary to propitiate an evil spirit, before they venture to put the cattle in to tread out the grain. They pass round the area, and sprinkle the edges of it with turmeric, and the post in the centre to which the animals are fastened. There are other enemies to the corn, that it would be well if they could keep in check by any process so simple.

In passing above a large tract of land, on which the crop seemed ripe enough to reap, I was astonished to see such universal activity as appeared to prevail. There was a person, apparently, at every ear of corn, busily employed in picking out the grain. I could not conjecture the cause of such extraordinary labour; till, on looking through my glass, I found the field was full of monkeys, each standing on its hind legs, and helping itself with the greatest assiduity. I was too well aware of the difficulty of obtaining meal, not to put an end to their repast. I fired a couple of balls above their heads, and set them off, scampering and screaming, to the adjoining trees, which

hung over a little brook, by the track of which I had soon after to pass. They were still in the branches, and chattered most discordantly while I walked through their dominions. Some eyed me, as if they suspected me of having been the cause of their interruption and alarm; and, jumping to the boughs above the road, shook them over my head, and grinned most hideously through them. A few of the oldest, who had their young to protect, came more boldly into the path, as if trying how near they could approach with impunity.

It was necessary to be on the alert, for their manœuvres bore a most threatening aspect. Although the gambols and tricks of the monkeys are highly amusing when viewed from a little distance, there are few things more uncomfortable than to be so surrounded by several hundreds—particularly when, as in my case, the conscience whispers that they have no reason to be pleased with the intrusion. I have heard people boast of shooting them, and finding it capital sport: I never could appreciate the feelings of such men, however. The looks of a monkey in pain are so

distressing, and his cries so pitiful, that, putting his near approach in appearance to our own race out of the question, it must be an inhuman spirit that could find pleasure in such amusement. I remember hearing an anecdote of a sportsman in the East having been induced to fire at, and wound a large monkey: one of the boldest of the pack immediately approached him, and catching hold of his gun, endeavoured to disarm him. A struggle took place, in which the man of the woods proved the strongest, and bore away his prize. The monkeys had observed the manner in which it had been fired, and attempted to imitate it: at length one succeeded in putting it to his shoulder; and the sportsman, not approving of his own battery being turned against him, commenced making his retreat—when off went the second barrel of the gun! The recruits, frightened at the noise themselves had made, threw down the cause of it, and flew to the trees; while the intruder narrowly escaped being wounded, and was obliged to abandon his fowl-piece to the future entertainment of the wood-rangers. The natives do not venerate



them in any part of the hills ; but, nevertheless, they are as fat and sleek as the sacred broods that are met with in the plains.

June 21st and 22nd.—We are now traversing that fertile country we had seen sloping down to the Ganges, from the first height from which we gained a view of that river. From Paloo we have entered a different climate completely : villages appear at every two or three miles apart, and we pass over comparatively level roads, through terraces well cultivated and sheltered with fruit-trees of every description, the produce of which is now generally ripe. At each village we are presented with apricots and figs, and sometimes peaches ; but they are hard and insipid. It is a matter of great emulation among the people, who shall bring most fruit to us ; and it seems to be some amusement to them to endeavour to outdo each other in persuading us to eat.

At Ghosali, which is not three miles from Reithal, there is a neat temple, so covered by trees that we were close upon it before we discovered it. Near to this, on a beautiful green lawn, we encamped. The banks of the Ganges

are superior in cultivation and in extent to those of any part of the Jumna; the villages are much more populous, and the inhabitants appear more civilized. We are now amply rewarded for our toils in gaining the source of the river, by the pleasant orchards and cleanly villages we are able to encamp near, on its banks. We meet frequently with travellers from the most distant quarters of the mountains, and find ourselves so completely on a high road, that we move merrily along, and hear news of other worlds at every new place we halt at. This has had a most enlivening effect upon our people; for they bring me with the utmost delight the simplest intelligence, as if it were necessary to have proof that we had not left the limits of their own sphere—a belief, that I was inclined to think more than one felt disposed to indulge in.

We still, in spite of the superior information of the natives of these villages, retain our powers of attraction. We are beset by the curious and the idle as much as we have ever been; and in one or two instances, when we have been pressed to remain among them, it was that they might

Although  
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living companion of the nature I allude to: the Highlanders of Scotland have some superstition also regarding them; and my Highlanders of "Snowy Imaus" are most decidedly averse to their destruction, or their attempt to forsake the natal soil.

We have quitted the country of pheasants, but we still meet with black partridges; and in my pursuit of the latter, I am ever doomed to be interrupted by the untimely appearance of a bear. I observed a bird at some little distance run into a small clump of shrubs, and followed it. I began most lustily to beat the bushes with my gun; and crying "whist! whist!" boldly entered the midst of them. A bear stood up on his hind legs, its snout nearly touching my face, as I bent down to disentangle the skirt of my coat from the briers. I started at being brought face to face with the enemy; and not being able to effect a speedy retreat, took off my hat, and waved it before his eyes. We never lose by politeness; and, although I uncapped from a different motive, I was glad to find it had its effect.

The bear ran up the hill, round which one of my servants was winding, and came full upon him. He had a gun in his hand, unloaded, and covered with a woollen bag, which, in his anxiety to defend himself, he had thrust half off: recollecting, however, it was uncharged, he waved the dangling part of the bag in the bear's eyes, as I had done the hat; and shouting "bo! bo!" as loud as he could, scared the animal away. The bear seemed perfectly satisfied at the double ceremony he had met with; and, escaping up the hill, did not venture to return. It seems surprising that we should be able to get rid of a wild beast in so simple a manner: but I am convinced that such sudden surprises are frequently more efficacious than open warfare. It is not probable that you will kill at the first shot; and although you may wound mortally, I have no doubt the dying hug of a bear would be as formidable as that of a healthy one. There could be no edification, and not much safety, in the death-bed of a tiger. I would prefer therefore adopting some *ruse*, to placing myself in the predicament of partaking in his dying throes.

Some years ago, I was acquainted with an officer who got rid of a bear in a still more singular manner. He was pursued by one when in the jungle of Ceylon, separated from his companions, and having no weapon with him. He had a bottle of brandy slung across his body, and on finding the bear close in his rear, he drew it forth like another Falstaff, and struck the enemy a back-handed blow with it on the head. The bottle broke; and the spirit streaming down his face, got into his eyes, and effectually stopped the pursuit. I have mentioned the great faith placed by natives in the external use of brandy: this application of it, however, could scarcely have entered into their contemplation.

Our next step was to the village of Neithall. It is six miles from Ghosali, and a little above the river, situated on a hill, at the foot of which we encamped. We passed through a populous and merry country, well cultivated with rice. In the present stage of that grain, it is far from agreeable to roam through the fields; and at no time is the face of the country beautified by such a crop! The valleys seem now to be lakes: the

rice is almost half grown, and nearly lost in water; the terraces are divided by narrow ridges, over which it is necessary to creep cautiously one by one—for woe to the clumsy traveller who steps into the bog beside him!

At one period of its growth the rice crop is transplanted, and the ground undergoes a species of turning up, that presents a most singular scene. A number of loose cattle are turned into the field, and driven by the voice of the farmer in every direction through it. Some of them sink so deeply, that it is difficult to recover them; the splashing of the animals, and the shouting of the men to cheer them on, afford a contrast to the wild singing of the women, as they gather the plants.

The pipe and the tom-tom are unceasing accompaniments; and the vale resounds all day with every variety of noise and merriment. Then, as before, the *improvisatrice* were women, and we were the themes of their songs. We were able to catch some of their ideas; and as they will not always bear a literal interpretation, I have ventured to arrange the purest in a free one. The feats of the white men were the unchanging

and apparently inexhaustible subjects: the fancy of one singer called forth the ideas of another, and when each had afforded a line, they seized upon the one they most approved of, and gave it as a fearfully emphatic chorus. "*Sahib Logue*," which properly signifies "gentlemen," I have translated by the term with which I have no doubt it is constantly associated in the minds of the singers.

## THE WHITE MEN.

Lo! the white men have been to the mountains of snow,

And have seen the great Gunga flow over the plain

Let us labour no more, for the rice crop will grow,

The white men must always bring wealth in their train.

See, the white men are smiling; the maids they adore

Are far, far away, in the realms of the west.

Do they smile upon us?—we will labour no more;

When the white men are happy, their servants are blest.

See, the tents are all spread—they have kindled the fires.

And the travellers will rest in the valley to-day.

We will labour no more; all the white man desires

We will hasten to offer, and court him to stay.

Collins, in one of his *Oriental Eclogues*, makes his hero stray through rice fields—



— What time 'tis sweet o'er fields of rice to stray."

Had he tried the experiment himself, I think he would hardly have sent him upon so uncomfortable an expedition.

Travelling is often sadly matter of fact: it is too prone to remove the veil that poetry has thrown over scenery. It is better, for the purposes of a poet, to view objects through the imagination: and the traveller, who is fortunate enough to be able to see through the same medium, has an additional pleasure in his researches that the more short-sighted one cannot know. Nothing can be more stupid than a high road and a guide-book. It is ludicrous, though perhaps commendable enough, to see (as I doubt not many continental travellers have done) a fat elderly gentleman, with the drops of perspiration trickling down his cheeks, as he toils up a hill to enable him to say he has been on its summit, pause in the midst of the most beautiful scenery to fumble about the leaves of his Tourist's Guide, and read the description of some demolished windmill: and, having ascertained its "whereabouts," with as much glee as if he had discovered a land-

mark in a dangerous voyage, pass on to the critically laid down position of a lime-kiln, and reap from the correctness of his book, the pleasures a less precise traveller would draw from the charms of the landscape, or the recollections of the spot.

Thanks to the thin partitions that divide some of Mr. Meurice's rooms, I once became privy to the studies of a worthy pair, who occupied an adjoining chamber to me, during their visit to the well-explored city of Paris. At six o'clock every morning, with the most praiseworthy perseverance, did the good easy man read a chapter from his guide-book to his attentive spouse, and endeavour to arrange the labours for the day. This was no easy matter; for she, upholding a privilege of choice, was for courts and camps; while he, deeming it dignified in a male traveller to be something of a *virtuoso*, maintained the superiority of statues and columns. As the arguments were loud and long, it was not my fault that I overheard them.

A French *savant* left unexplored the ruins of Thebes because he caught a glimpse of an English

maid-servant in a pink spencer, contemplating a sphinx. I do not mean to justify his flight, but positively such a spectre was enough to scare his sublime sensations. I wish to uphold the dignity of travel, and I have been led into these remarks by that desire. Such *mal-à-propos* meetings can never tend to increase the mental pleasure or extend the researches. The boldest sportsman would fly if a lion entered a drawing-room: the keenest antiquary would withdraw in despair if he saw an Abigail scratching her name in the tomb of Osymandias: 'tis the fitness of things that constitutes the enjoyment.

## CHAPTER V.

Reputed source of the Ganges—A miracle—A frail fair-one—  
 The lord of Burkotee—The fakir's festival—Sacred temple  
 —Women, the source of evil—Agreeable repast—Simple  
 fare—Village of Mallee—Mountain breezes—Right of  
 possession—Route to Dhoondah—Creed of the Hindoos—  
 Religious martyrs—Arrival at Patthore—Annoyances of  
 flies—Agriculture—Uncomfortable shoes—Cedar tree—  
 Sacred plants—Tyranny over servants—Situation of Bar-  
 rahotee—Fakir tribute—Valley of Chinath—The "happy  
 valley"—Venomous serpents—Wild honey.

JUNE 23rd.—We passed for several miles through rice, or more properly along the furrows that divided the fields, and had a full opportunity of admiring the manner of irrigation followed by the natives; for we were too often obliged not only to experience the breadth, but the depth of their drains. They have the advantage, from the many rills that descend from the heights above them, of being able to draw water down to their grounds; no great ingenuity,

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up; and to this *sanctum sanctorum* I must attribute a legend my guide to Gungoutri related to me. The celebrated saint of Nanguan erected this temple for his family worship. Soon after it was completed he quarrelled with his mother, and forbade her to enter it for prayer. She, by virtue, I suppose, of her son's piety, has contrived to be immortal, and endeavours to penetrate every day to its mysteries. The moment she appears, which is always at the dawn of day, the door closes and baffles all human power to open it. The father of the saint, a pious and deserving parent, who probably gained his son's esteem by taking his part against his mother, has the privilege of breaking the spell. He comes to his devotions every evening; and at his "Open—Sesame," the door obeys, and grants him free admission. The natives of Barahat did not seem aware of the great miracle so constantly wrought in their village; but I think it too ingenious a tale to omit, particularly as my friend the brahmin concluded it in his usual manner, by affirming he never told lies. A moral, however, lurks in the

story. It would be unjust to the saint and his miracle to suppress the conduct of the lady, that induced him to exclude her from the temple.

Nanguan is not far from the castle of Burkotee, where, in the olden time, dwelt a formidable chieftain; his manner of living was so splendid, that he excited the envy of the neighbouring men, and (the truth must be told) the love of the surrounding fair. Among his most devoted admirers was the mother of our saint: she was used in her own mind to contrast his riches and luxurious fare with the simple diet and hard labour of her own home. She was beautiful, and had the gift to know it; and she felt that she had attracted the notice of the powerful lord of Burkotee. One day, while she filled her pitcher at the banks of the Jumna, and within sight of the castle she sighed to be mistress of, she reasoned gravely within her mind what course she should pursue. "Why should I draw water," thought she, "when the ladies of Burkotee have so many handmaids to attend upon them? I am as delicate as they

are;" and placing her earthen pitcher on her head, in a fatal moment took her resolution to submit to such drudgery no longer: scarcely was the rebellious determination formed, when the vessel broke, and the water streamed about her figure. Now her husband was a poor man, and could not afford to have pitchers broken by carelessness. He scolded his wife severely, and would not believe her when she said it burst of its own accord while resting quietly on her head. Her son, a more subtle personage, exclaimed,—“O mother! what wicked thoughts must those have been that even made the pitcher break!” She resolutely swore that no vice had entered her mind; but her countenance belied the assertion, and the saint charged her directly with the criminal intention of abandoning his father’s house for the castle of Burkotee; then, taking her by the hand, led her to the door, and vowed she never should pollute its threshold more! He determined, however, that she should not pass to the chief, whose gold had won her heart, and confined her in a cave within the mountains on his own banks of the river.



"The bold baron" was not to be intimidated by a saint; and, discovering her retreat, crossed with a large force, and bore her to his own hall. The poor son was obliged to adopt a *ruse* to recover his mother from her disgraceful predicament: and, feigning to forgive her and her paramour, invited them to a banquet in the valley of Nanguan. The villagers thought he was mad. How could a faquir give a feast to the greatest man in the mountains? The chief of Burkotee anticipated much fun, and the lady of his love was horrified at the idea of his being fed with the coarse cakes that had so materially assisted in estranging her affections from the husband of her youthful choice.

The day arrived, and a mighty host accompanied the chief to the faquir's festival. Their landlord stood alone in the valley, naked, and unconscious of the gathering company. No fires were kindled, no meal was baked, and not a goat had bled. The wrath of Burkotee's master was unbounded: he was on the point of sacrificing the saint to his disappointment—when, lo! a sudden storm seemed to darken the vale, and the pious

landlord moved forward to welcome his guests: bands of spirits descended on the green, and spread a rich and plenteous feast upon it. It was not to be enjoyed in peace, however; for the commissariat was followed by a numerous army that attacked and beat the soldiers of the wicked lord. He himself was slain, and the woman, the cause of all, was recovered by her indignant son. He soon after removed to Barahat, and built the temple that subjects his mother to such constant mortification.

The brahmin was very precise in his narration, even to the description of the food, and the men and arms that the saint had so speedily mustered. I confess to having visited the temple at the time that it should close against the admission of the lady, and watched in vain for some change in its appearance. My profane presence, I feared, must have had the sad effect of giving her free ingress to the sanctuary; for no barrier presented itself at the usual time. After due search, however, I was relieved to find a sufficient reason, at least for an unbeliever --there was no door! This little dilemma would but increase the miracle in

the devout confidence of my friend the brahmin, who seemed highly pleased at the punishment of the woman; for he partook largely in the orthodox belief of the East, that no evil can take place of which a woman is not the first cause.

"Who is she?" a rajah was always in the habit of asking, whenever a calamity was related to him, however severe or however trivial. His attendants reported to him one morning that a labourer had fallen from a scaffold when working at his palace, and had broken his neck—"Who is she?" immediately demanded the rajah. "A man; no woman, great prince!" was the reply. "Who is she?" repeated with increased anger, was all the rajah deigned to utter. In vain did the servants assert the manhood of the labourer. "Bring me instant intelligence what woman caused this accident, or woe upon your heads!" exclaimed the prince. In an hour the active attendants returned; and, prostrating themselves, cried out, "O wise and powerful prince!"—"Well, who is she?" interrupted he. "As the ill-fated labourer was working on the scaffold, he was attracted by the beauty of one

of your highness's damsels; and, gazing upon her, lost his balance, and fell to the ground."—"You hear, now," said the prince, "no accident can happen, without a woman, in some way, being an instrument."

Barahat is beautifully situated in an extensive valley, bounded by high mountains, at the base of the southern range of which flows the Ganges. Their summits are crowned with pines, and a great variety of fruit-trees adorn the sides. Throughout the vale many are also scattered; and the figs and barberries being quite ripe, give a delicious treat, as we pluck them on our way: we carry our morning share of wheaten cakes in our pockets, and find the most agreeable breakfast waiting us, by the banks of every running brook.

I have learned more of the kindly disposition of my followers, by adopting this mode of breakfasting, than I should probably have had an opportunity of doing by a more substantial meal. They never fail to pick the most tempting of the fruit for us, as they pass the trees, declaring that they must be the best judges of their own country

productions; and whenever those before us find a pleasant shade and clear fountain, they spread our repast upon leaves by its side. I have seen them, when the drops of perspiration were coursing each other down their breasts, refuse to touch a fig till we had chosen for ourselves, and eaten; indeed, they appeared so grieved when we relaxed in our luscious labour, that we frequently were loth to vex them by a pause. I know no sensual gratification equal to such a scene.

We divided our banquet with the birds: there was plenty, however, for all; for many a blooming fruit-tree is doomed 'to waste its sweetness on the desert air.' I would recommend the luxurious slave, who cannot coax an appetite with all the means and appliances of the profound art of cookery, to try our simple fare; let him sally forth at daylight in the morning, a piece of brown bread in his pocket, and sit under a fig-tree, when he feels fatigued, a fountain as clear as glass near him—if he does not seek to return to it again and again, he is only fit to sicken and to die!

The grain, excepting the rice, had been cut

down: all the fields were every where full of partridges; and thousands of doves, of the most various and beautiful hues, gave us every means of supplying our table, if we had the hearts to kill them. We did not feel disposed, however, to rob the tuneful grove of one of its choir. They almost approached near enough to take food from us; and they looked upon us from the lowest branches with so calm a confidence, that we could not muster courage to pull the trigger against them. The kokila, a large green bird with a yellow breast, cooes in the sweetest manner. There were many of them in the surrounding trees; and my servants (for they may eat certain birds) assured me they made most delicious food.

The village of Barahat, though a great thoroughfare, differs in no respect in its arrangement from those situated further up the country, nor does its holiness promote its cleanliness.

June 24th, 25th.—We reached in a few hours, having passed over a valley of rice similar to the former ones, the village of Matlee. It lies to the west of Barahat, and stands in the centre of a

pretty plain, a little removed from the banks of the Ganges. It is the remote corner of the vale, of which Barahat is the centre—which is rather too much of a summer climate for the long walks we are forced to take, and we sigh to reach the summits of the hills again. It is not always possible, however, to make a choice: the bordering ridges are not long enough to continue to travel upon them; and the constant necessity for descending and ascending, is scarcely repaid by the brief feelings of pleasure imparted by the elevation.

Transient as it must be, however, there are few pleasures equal to it. The air on the mountain heights is so exhilarating, that fatigue is entirely impossible; and from the lightness of my spirits immediately after a change from the close atmosphere of the valleys, I sometimes fear that I may commit extravagancies, likely to shake the opinion the natives hold of our dignity and importance. It has a similar effect upon them, however; and the moment they deposit their burdens, they fly like wild goats over the crags in pursuit of berries, or in search of water.

The arrival of our little party on its ground is a most animating scene. After having performed the duty of quarter-master-general, we retire to the shadow of a neighbouring tree, and wait till all is arranged: each coolie fixes his own particular part of the tent, or places in a suitable spot his own load. It is amusing to observe how tenacious they are upon this matter; no man will suffer another to interfere with him, and it has often happened that I have been obliged to settle a dispute about the lacing my tent, when the bearers of two adjoining portions differed, with whom the duty lay of threading what they were pleased to consider a neutral loop.

Being, as I have noticed, already divided into parties, it was a matter of importance to the first who arrived, to get rid of their duty, and secure a place for their messmates. A race generally takes place towards the most inviting spot; and the one who succeeds in fixing his blanket first at the goal, wins it for his comrades: this right of possession is never disputed; and the losers of the first-gained position make a race for the next, and continue till all are properly arranged.



This emulation is conducted with the most rigid justice ; and as every one must deliver his load before he ventures to choose, they start fair for the chase : no man dare throw his blanket of possession in passing the most inviting bower with his burden on his back—no, he must finish one course before he enters on another.

Our sojourn at Matlee has been too bright and sunny, to afford any incident : in rosy bowers all must be calm and sweet. Where there is nothing but delight, there can be little interest. It is indeed too true that, ‘man is made to mourn :’ for no mind (though it may look like a paradox) can be happy in the midst of perpetual pleasure.

The keenest pangs the wretched find  
Are rapture to the dreary woe—  
The heaviest desert of the mind,  
The waste of feelings unemploy’d,  
Who would be doom’d to gaze upon  
A sky without a cloud or sun ?

We had the good fortune to have our route varied a little to Dhoondah : we wound by the banks of the river, passing occasionally over rocks ; and gained the summit of a little hill, on

which we are placed. The Ganges winds, from a short distance beyond Matlee, suddenly to the south. The neighbourhood of our present position is well cultivated, and the people improve, particularly the fair sex, who really merit that distinction, in appearance greatly. The besetting sin of dirtiness, however, still holds a firm seat among their characteristic faults; and so perfectly unused are they to the luxury of water, or the use of it, beyond the one of drinking, that it is sometimes difficult to ascertain the natural colour of the skin for the case that hides it.

Our servants, who are as much in the other extreme, are horrified to a degree; and would not take meat or drink from them to save their lives, even if the hillmen were invested with the brahminical thread. "I would not drink water from a Pariah, if I were perishing on a rock," says my Sirdar, who is a native of Orissa, from the neighbourhood of Juggernaut. Such is the high feeling of a Hindoo: the devotion to a false creed of such people, who will perish rather than break the smallest of its commands, even when self-preservation might suggest an

excuse, is indeed the most difficult problem of human nature.

The two lowest castes, the husbandmen and mechanics, equally scrupulous as the priests and the soldiers, are heroes in no other way. From their possession of every quality opposed to heroism in other respects, they are the last of the human race I should select as capable of such devotion. The true Rajpoot is a noble creature, and the brahmin I am not disposed to impeach. It is indeed strange that a coward in all matters, and a knave in most, will submit to the extremest suffering with the highest fortitude. A weak woman, however, fires the pile with a serene countenance that is in a few minutes to consume her. Happily for the Christian world, the days when martyrdom was necessary are gone by. Should any one of the present age, however, be disposed to listen with incredulity or ridicule to the tales of suffering that have been handed down to us in the cause of religion, they may draw too clear a corroboration of the patient endurance the human mind is capable of, under the severest torments,

from the sad scenes acted every day in the East.

Between Barahat and Matlee we crossed over a bridge that seemed, as we approached it, to be suspended in the air. It rested upon wooded banks, on each side of the river; the cranes from which it hung were so lost among the trees, as to render it doubtful what supported the flimsy structure. It was a narrow chain of ropes, scarcely less difficult than the bridge upon which the Mahometans are doomed to skait into Paradise; a yawning Phlegethon below to receive us, if our consciences betrayed us on the passage. At the bottom, about a yard asunder, were small pieces of wood to step on, and necessary to prevent the bridge gathering about you as a net, which, when the wind blew strongly, (as it did on our passage,) they even could not prevent. It had the disadvantage of being fully one hundred yards long. A herd of cattle were crossing a little below us; and to avoid their being carried away by the force of the current, a rope was passed over the river, and fastened to trees on each side. The animals were driven in above it, and kept in their course by the management of the line.

June 26th.—We ascended from Dhoondah to a village called Patthora, over a steep ridge covered with fir-trees—a distance of nearly seven miles. It is situated on the crest of a line of hills, where there is very little wood, and all around is well cultivated. The mountains form a large circle, sloping gradually to a river at the bottom of the range we are on. The Ganges, of which we just catch a glimpse, flows to the south-east: on the brows of the hills are a great many villages; and the fields of corn, some being reaped, and others ploughed, give a picturesque and animated appearance to the scene. Since the day we reached Barahat, we have had no rain; and it has been this morning excessively hot. The thermometer has been generally from 98° to 100°.

We are fortunate in not being so much annoyed by stinging insects as we were in the closer vales on the shores of the Jumna; but equal plagues assail us. The common flies assemble in such multitudes about us, that we find it impossible to keep them from the interior of the tent with all the arrangements we are capable of making. I am not certain but they are as an-

noying to the full as the wasps and the musquitoes: we have a respite, to be sure, at night; but during the day we cannot rest a moment. We undergo, in effect, the torments of Tantalus; for when we raise the cup to our lips, some dozen unlucky flies tremble for a moment in the steam, and drop into the tea before it can reach them. In wine, in water, it is equally the same: we can never venture to drink without a spoon in the hand, to skim the drowning insects from the glass; and even then we must gratify our thirst at the expense of a mouthful of flies.

The road we wound up to Patthora being excessively steep, we arrived a considerable time before our baggage, and lay down upon the grass beneath a group of walnut-trees that surrounded the ruins of a temple thickly overrun by ivy. It was a beautiful mound, and stood below the village, the only green spot in a wide circle of fallow fields. An old man and two little children were driving the plough through the one at our feet. The machine was so light, that they were obliged to stand upon a board fixed above the share, to give it weight to cut

the earth. The moment the old man observed us, he whispered something to the children, and sent them to the village, while he drew near to pay his respects to us. The boy and girl soon returned, bearing a bowl of milk and a branch of barberries, which, with the best grace in the world, (for they had "learnt the luxury of doing good.") in the school of nature, they presented to us. They seemed sufficiently thanked by the delight with which we hailed it; for it was grown extremely hot, and the water-spring was half a mile off. Such simple actions speak volumes in favour of the natives of this part of the mountains. I have found them much superior, not only to the inhabitants of the higher ranges, but even to those who live on a level with themselves by the margin of the Jumna.

To-day our situation is much cooler than it has been, and we enjoy a temperature of 10 and 12 degrees less than we found in the valley below. The severe journeys over rough and pointed rocks, with the frequent necessity of wading through swamps and rivulets, have nearly reduced us to a bare-footed pilgrimage. We have for-

tunately found shoes in these villages, to which nothing but a last resource could reconcile us. The soles are composed of dried leather, several folds of which are fastened together by thongs, which, passing through them, are tied in knots at the bottom; a knitting of common string, reaching to the ankle and fitting quite close to the foot, serves the purpose of an upper-leather. The sole is so hard, that it is no easy matter to walk any distance in them without being well bruised. The natives very seldom use them; and we have scarcely met with a dozen pair in the hills. They are made, I believe, in the kingdom of Nepaul, from which every thing employed in arts or arms seems also to come.

We have seen some men supplied with cock-eries, and the curved knife of the Ghorka; but such weapons are very rare. In the higher regions, where wood is much used in building, I have witnessed the progress of a house, in the construction of which but one instrument was employed—a very small one—a hatchet, having the head flat for the purposes of a hammer. Where nails would be requisite, pegs of wood



are substituted, although they are seldom needed, the planks being always laid into each other by grooves. The timber of the Deo Dhar (Cedar), a sacred tree, is usually applied to building. It is very soft and easily worked, and grows to a prodigious size. The shadow of one of these trees is commonly chosen for the site of a temple. I have seen them of thirty feet and more in circumference, and towering to a great height. This tree, I fancy, as the Ganges and other rivers also must, owes its sanctity to its use.

There are throughout the mountains many of the sacred shrubs of the Hindoos, which give great delight, as my servants fall in with them. They pick the leaves, and running with them to me, cry, "See, Sir, see, our holy plants are here!" and congratulate each other on having found some indication of a better land than they are generally inclined to consider the country of the Pariahs. The happiness these simple remembrances shed over the whole party is so enlivening, that every distress and fatigue seems to be forgotten. When we behold a servant approaching with a sprig of

the *Dona* in his hand, we hail it as the olive-branch, that denotes peace and good-will for the rest of the day, if, as must sometimes be the case, they have been in any way interrupted.

Even these little incidents speak so warmly in favour of the Hindoo disposition, that, in spite of much that may be uncongenial to an European in their character, they cannot fail to inspire him with esteem, if not affection. I wish that many of my countrymen would learn to believe that the natives are endowed with feelings, and surely they may gather such an inference from many a similar trait to the one I have related. Hardness of heart can never be allied to artless simplicity : that mind must possess a higher degree of sensibility and refinement, that can unlock its long-confined recollections by so light a spring as a wild flower.

I have often witnessed, with wonder and sorrow, an English gentleman stoop to the basest tyranny over his servants, without even the poor excuse of anger, and frequently from no other reason than because he could not understand their language. The question, from the answer being

unintelligible, is instantly followed by a blow. Such scenes are becoming more rare, and indeed are seldom acted but by the younger members of society; they are too frequent notwithstanding and should any thing that has fallen from me here, induce the cruelly disposed to reflect a little upon the impropriety and mischief of their conduct, when about to raise their hand against a native, and save one stripe to the passive people who are so much at the mercy of their masters' tempers, I shall indeed be proud.

June 27th. — From Patthora we made one long descent to the banks of the Ganges. it was a steep path, and occasionally wound through a wood of great richness. We reached the river just where it makes a sweep to the south, and on the bend, or a little above it, we found a neat temple to Mahadeo: it was singularly clean; and an old man, who seemed to have the care of it, sat like a statue at the gate, with his eyes fixed upon the sun: a large white beard hung down to his breast, and his string of beads lay upon his hand. He was the most venerable, but immovable person I ever saw. We were

not disposed to interrupt one who seemed so perfectly indifferent to us, and left him, unmolested, to his reflections.

We followed the right bank of the river, among figs and apricot-trees, and along hedges of barberries, till we reached the village of Barrehtee. It was situated at the entrance of a rich valley, which stretched for a long distance before us, bounded by wild crags on one side, and on the other by the holy stream, which was here marked by one of the largest temples we have met with. The interior of it formed a Dhurumsalah, or resting-place, that might contain fifty people: it was a square, wooden platform, supported on posts, and sheltered by a canopy of the shape of a pagoda. It hung over the river; and we were glad to take advantage of the repose it offered, while our people pushed further into the valley, to fix our little city.

There were a few faquirs in Barrehtee on their way to Gungoutri, and they were busy in collecting their tribute of food from the villagers. "*Ram, Ram,*" is the only word they utter, sometimes striking the hollow gourd they carry

in their hands. Each person, as they arrive opposite the cabins, brings out his offering, and they are not long in thus gathering a meal: some persons give sticks, and one produces a light: and the devout are soon busy in the preparation of their savoury messes.

When we pursued our route to Chinalli, where we proposed halting, I soon discovered, notwithstanding our delay at Barrehtee, that we were likely to reach it before our carriers. The baggage was lying deserted on the ground a little within the vale, and the bearers were amusing themselves in the branches of the mango-trees, which, for the first time, we had met with in the mountains. The fruit was not ripe, but the people found it too attractive to pass. The trees were very large, and the fruit promised to be so likewise.

In the valley of Chinalli, the mango thrives very well indeed. It was introduced by the Nepaulese; and an old man in the village remembers the seed being put into the ground: he may be about sixty years of age. Many small plants are scattered about, that have

sprung from the falling of the seed; and, in course of time, this pretty valley promises to be one large mango grove. It is so enclosed by mountains, that we have found it oppressively hot; the thermometer in the shade has been at 98° all day. The natives produce remarkably good onions, for which the soil seems well adapted; they also have been introduced from a foreign climate; but as the people are very fond of them, they are likely to be naturalized in this part of the hills.

The vale is more extensive and more beautiful than any we have traversed within the mountains; so like is it, in every respect, to the "Happy Valley" in which Rasselas was confined, that there is scarcely a particular in that description that does not apply to the Valley of Chinalli. The kid and the monkey are to be seen every where; but here alone, as if to realise the picture in all points, have we found "the solemn elephant reposing in the shade." The Rajah of Tirhee possesses four; and finding the climate of his own city too cold for them, sends them into the neighbouring valleys to enjoy a

more genial air. Two are quartered on Chinnalli: they do not look very well; and I fear they fare but indifferently. They lead an idle life, however, passing the sunny hours (and all the day is sun-shine) beneath the branches of a mango-tree.

We chose a spot to encamp on, that seemed to have been cut on purpose near the summit of the mountain that bounded the plain: it was well sheltered; and beside it (which tempted us to fix there) fell a large body of water, that, crossing the plain, assisted in its irrigation, and lost itself in the river. Our servants took possession of a spacious cave, the mouth of which was overgrown by blackberries, ripe and tempting; and from our position we could overlook the happy valley: there were many small villages in it. We had descended from a height to its level, and there was no way of escaping from it, but by ascending a greater one: like land lakes, these unconnected spots stand, entirely surrounded by mountains. Every thing required by the inhabitants is found within them: they seek no pleasures beyond what they

produce, and know no sorrows that do not spring directly from themselves.

“ Though all the blessings of nature are collected,” its evils are not quite “ extracted and excluded.” We disturbed, while they were basking in the sun, two venomous serpents; one I was able to kill, the other escaped: they were both nearly four feet long. The one that made off, we fancied was a *cobra capella*, and watched its doubtful windings through the grass, over which we were walking with much apprehension: the dead one was of a light blue colour, and very thin; our guide declared a bite was fatal. I did not know its name; and the native one is of so unpronounceable a description, that I never could succeed in spelling it.

Among the sweets of the valley, we found an abundance of very good honey; it is made from the wild jasmin, and has a peculiarly delicious flavour. In every part of the hills we have met with it in great perfection and quantity—indeed alluring enough to seduce to luxury more hardy



wanderers than ourselves. So excellent is it, that we have it mixed in our bread, and use it as a substitute for sugar on all occasions.

## CHAPTER VI.

Old Man of the Mountain—Singular circumstance—Descent into a cave—An unexpected visitor—Party of Ghorkas—Mode of carrying children—Management of children—Village of Moralie—Dismal journey—Velocity of sound—Opinion of an echo—Deserted temple—Desolate scene—Route of Landour—† fragile habitations—The cholera morbus—Its ravages—Arrival at Landour—Terrific thunder-storm—Perilous situation—Effects of the lightning—Blindness in sheep—Amusements—The ordeal—Quarrels—Extraordinary request—A jealous husband—The penitent wife—Female peasantry—Condition of servants—Fatal jealousy—Custom of divorce—The rejected villager—Valley of the Dhoon—Magnificent sunrise.

JUNE 28th.—On leaving the "Happy Valley," we bid farewell to the sacred river; and, passing over a high ridge to the north-west, descended through a dark wood to a stream that divided it from a still higher one, on the summit of which

stands Lallooric. The village is perched upon a peak that overhangs the centre of the hill, and seems to be perpendicularly above us. We wound round and round for two long hours, sometimes out of sight of the much-desired goal, and at others so near, that it was mortifying in the extreme to turn again from it : for, like the cup on the rainbow, the nearer we seemed to approach, the more difficult was it to attain. We at length reached it, and found but three miserable houses by the side of a large tract of rice, so covered with water, that we took it for a lake, and expected to find trout.

The hospitality and attention of the old Man of the Mountain was beyond all we had elsewhere experienced : he came a part of the way down to meet us, and, seeing us considerably exhausted, forced us to rest wherever he thought there was an agreeable place ; cutting the long grass that grew around, and spreading it for a couch for us to recline on. His companions were equally anxious for our comfort ; and we had no occasion to ask for anything. Milk and curds, with figs and barberries, were immediately spread before

us, and we soon forgot the hardships of the way. The spot where the houses stand, with the rice ground about, is the only level space within sight. Higher mountains surround the one on which this little plain stands, and lower hills follow each other to the base of it.

It was very late in the day before our baggage made its appearance; but beneath the shadow of a tree with a bed of rushes, and the old man to converse with, (for he would not leave us alone,) we had no cause for impatience. He seemed to consider it a high breach of manners to abandon us for an instant to ourselves; and when any mighty matter called him away, he brought a substitute, and introduced him to our notice with perfect ease, and directed him to watch our movements, and attend to our comforts.

In the evening we were agreeably startled at hearing a shot at no great distance from us; and immediately returned it, hoping that some stray sportsman might be in search of a shelter: a second followed our own shot, and we made the mountains echo with our voices. The people of the village, pleased with the chance of seeing how

the "Sahib Logue" meet, flew in pursuit, and our little camp was instantly animated and happy. But the search for the cause of our bustle proved fruitless; and we passed the remainder of the evening in vain speculation upon the author of the report. Who could fire a gun, where guns were never seen but in the hands of Europeans?

June 29th.—Soon after we had commenced our journey this morning, it began to rain in the most pitiless manner I had ever experienced. We had to pass over three successive hills, the ascents to which were remarkably steep: on their summits were level meadows, well planted around, with many herds of deer browsing upon them. The paths were so slippery, it was nearly impossible to move over them; and we were so enveloped in clouds that we could not seek more widely for a surer footing.

On arriving at the point of a projecting crag, that was well concealed by brambles, I mistook the path, not observing the termination of the road from the many plants about it. I made a sudden descent through them to a cave below, that fortunately was not deeper than six or seven

feet from the crest that overhung it. I thought I had plunged through a trap-door to the subterranean habitation of some banditti. The storm was howling along the glens; and the black clouds were curling over the brow of the precipice on which the cavern hung. Nothing could be wilder or more magnificent than the scenery; and when a party of half-naked savages started on their feet, one of them holding a gun in his hand, I seemed so completely in the brigand's cave, that I felt some disappointment that they did not secure me, and seize upon my possessions.

In one corner of the cave sat a woman blowing the fire through a reed: a little girl knelt near her, kneading up some cakes; while a boy, of about six years of age, was engaged, at no great distance from them, in polishing the cooking-pots with the dust that lay beside him. The woman was tall and thin; and so fair, that she might have been a bandit's bride among the hills of Europe. She had been out in the rain, and her black hair was hanging loose about her shoulders: a white robe was thrown, in the graceful manner of the Hindoo women, over her

person; and she formed so picturesque a figure, that an artist or a novelist would have been glad to have seized her as a model.

There were three men, who had been stretching their listless length along the ground, awaiting the completion of their meal, until my unexpected arrival had called them to their feet. The one that bore the gun was lying near the skin of a bear, which was pegged into the earth for the purpose of drying: this accounted for the shot of the evening before. I learned from them that they were a party of Ghorkas, who had formerly been in the northern Himalaya, and, having connected themselves with some of the inhabitants, had returned from Nepaul to visit them, and were now on their way back to their own country, some village not very far from Katmando. I sent one of them out to look for my brother, who had lingered behind me in the ascent; and, on his reaching the cave, we determined to remain in it till the rain was abated. This adventure (for I may call it so, although the catastrophe was so tame) furnished something more than an outline from which the ima-

gination might fill up any appalling or interesting picture that it pleased: I was as well satisfied that the conclusion was left to my fancy; for I do not seek either "to point a moral, or adorn a tale."

My newly-acquired companions were merely resting until it was fair enough to proceed; and on the first glimpse of sun-shine we sallied forth together. I perceived, when we began to move, an addition to our party that I had not before noticed: a little baby, that had been fast asleep in a corner during our stay in the cave, wrapped up in its blanket, was hoisted upon its father's back; and, well accustomed to that mode of travelling, seemed perfectly at its ease. The man bore it as he would have done a common bundle; and, tying the ends of the blanket across his chest, took no further notice of his burden. The little thing occasionally pushed its black head through a hole in the top of its nest; and, looking good-humouredly around, appeared conscious that impatience was useless, quietly drew it in again, and composed itself to sleep. When the elder boy was tired, his mother jerked him



up, and placed him astride upon her hip. This latter is the most common way of carrying children throughout the East; and, however uncomfortable it may appear to us, they almost seem to lounge in the position: the mother throws out her hip for the child to rest upon, and never even lends a hand to support it. It is necessary for the child, in order to keep its seat, to be perfectly upright; and this early discipline is doubtless one of the causes of the natives of the East being so straight.

It is singular how easy the parents in warm climates find it to manage their offspring: from the time they are born they seem to care little about them, bearing them with them through all weather, and in all occupations. They throw them indifferently on the grass, if they are working in the fields; and if travelling, they pack them in a basket, and swing them from one end of a bamboo, to balance a bundle of cooking-pots hanging from the other, which they carry over their shoulders. It is curious to see babes of a few months old, bearing all these early vicissitudes with as much philosophy and apathy, as

in after-life they do the more serious sufferings that "flesh is heir to." They are trained to Stoicism from the cradle.

We at length crossed all the high hills, and gained the village of Moralie, which stands on the southern side of the most elevated ridge, the Morana. We did not think it very promising; and, finding no clear space about, we parted with our friends, who seemed disposed to remain there, and continued to a place called Itali, about a couple of miles further on. We found a clear green spot above the bank of a river, that flowed from the Morana mountains past this village; and, tempted by a half-finished house where we could repose till our baggage arrived, resolved to remain on it. The rain was over, and the sun shining brightly. We stripped ourselves of our wet clothes; and, hanging them up to dry on the branches about, made ourselves as comfortable as nakedness and hunger could allow. The little strip of land on which we are, lies on each side of a river, flowing through a deep glen considerably below its level. It is well cultivated,

and there are many habitations within it ; but it has nothing sufficiently wonderful to tempt me to say any thing further about it.

June 30th.—We started this morning again in the rain ; and, descending to the river, followed its course through the dark glen, in which it runs with great rapidity. It seemed as if it were necessary to trust ourselves to be washed out of the dismal strait we were in, by placing ourselves in the middle of the stream: its current was the only indication we had, that there was a mode of escape ; there was no path on either side, and the water was up to the waist : I cannot therefore praise this day's journey.

The glen at length narrowed so much, that we anticipated a subterraneous passage into day, if we were doomed to see the sky once more. We turned round a rugged rock, beneath which the river grew darker and deeper, and suddenly broke upon a wide plain, or rather an extensive marsh. Rain still continued, and it was covered with a thick vapour. We had, like Satan, though with a different spirit, I hope,

In with the river sunk, and with it rose,  
Involved in rising mist; then sought  
Where to be hid.

The river flowed over the marsh, and very high mountains bounded it: there was no appearance of habitation, although it was richly cultivated with rice. A small temple stood in the centre, beneath a very indifferent Deo Dhar: for in the lowest parts they do not grow to any size or beauty. It was dedicated to the goddess Bowanee, and gave a name to the surrounding peak, called from her *Bowanee Ka Teeba*. So little wood was there within reach, that we found it difficult to obtain sufficient to kindle a fire for our breakfasts: we at length spied a boy tending cattle on the hill, and called out to him to get us milk and wood. He placed himself upon a high peak, and called aloud, "Two gentlemen have arrived: bring them milk and wood directly, and all they may require besides."

We remembered the feast in the valley of Nanguan, and looked with wonder upon the naked magician, who, we hoped, was to spread a banquet on the green before us. In less than an

last, our hopes were fulfilled; a train of villagers appeared with every thing that we desired.

In most mountains sound travels very far and fast, but these seemed to be most particularly calculated for such communication. In irregular stretches of peaked hills, the voice bounded, as it were, from one to another, increasing as it went. The men have an intonation that none but mountaineers can catch; and, dwelling on the last accent in a wild, and not unfrequently sweet manner, pushing the sound till they are nearly exhausted, and then abandon it to the echo, which never fails to second them most admirably. I was curious to know what idea the hillmen had formed if they had thought of the matter at all) of the reverberation of sound, and questioned the villagers who brought our supplies, straining my throat in the experiment, of what it was that mocked my words. It was long before I could succeed in making them understand my object: they had no term to express it by, and were perfectly unacquainted with the Hindostanee word for echo. They were afraid, for some

moments, to hazard an opinion; till one, more bold than the rest, stepped forth, and declared it must be a wild beast in the mountain, that was startled by our voices, and bellowed in return. "*Acha*," (good,) with a murmur of approval, ran through the party: this was a personification of the echo that might match the celebrated conversational one of Killarney.

The plain on which we were assembled, did not continue long deserted: about mid-day the men and women came to the rice grounds, with their music and their song: and we found ourselves more celebrated and more deafened than ever. Of all uncomfortable occupations on this earth, the culture of rice appears to me the worst. The women were all the day long up to their knees in mud, and their persons were sprinkled with it most bountifully.

The little temple to Bowanee is the most desolate of all we have met with: not a brahmin, not a village within sight of it. The pious sages of former days had, in these holy precincts, abundant leisure and quiet for the profoundest contemplation. Now, no offering seems

to be made at it, no incense burnt upon its altar, and no prayer breathed within it : it stands in the wilderness, a proof of the sanctity of former times, and a reproach perhaps for the indifference of the present. As the world has grown older, its allurements, I suppose, have become less fascinating ; for few people think it necessary to banish themselves now to gain the reputation of piety. The march of intellect, however, may have fortified their minds against temptation : or has the advance of luxury overthrown the virtue of self-denial ? Whatever may be the cause of such a change, India is not the only country where deserted temples stand to speak of what was, and what is not.

The forlorn appearance of a single tree in the desert increases the feeling of solitude ; and the neglected ruin of Bowanee heightened the desolation of the scene, when we first emerged from the bed of the river, and found ourselves in the midst of a dismal swamp ; for such a rice-ground, in its present stage, must ever seem to be. We were glad when the merry cultivators came to enliven the scene.

July 1st.—Continuing our route by the bank of the river, we reached a spot opposite the village of Tuttura, and had scarcely room to pitch our tents for the quantity of rice in every direction. We were forced to ascend the hill to some height, before we could get a dry space. The stream flowed between us and the village; it was full of trout, which my servants caught with a napkin tied like a landing-net to the end of a stick.

There was little inducement to continue in this neighbourhood; and, as we could not ascend to the summits of the hills with any chance of completing our journey, we determined to proceed to Ligrassa on the top of a high ridge, about three miles further from us: but my guide, who was evidently afraid to go to it, besought us not to stop there on any account, for the cholera morbus had been committing sad ravages among its inhabitants, and no stranger had gone through it for ten days.

Finding that Landour was only five hours' walk from this place, I agreed, to the delight of all, (for the report of the "city of the plague"



being so near at hand had spread a panic among my followers,) to remain at Tuttura. There were no means of roaming about its neighbourhood, from the universal deluge that overwhelmed it; and we were glad when the morning gave us an opportunity of quitting it.

July 2nd.—By way of getting in good time to Landour, (for we had at length reached the last day's journey,) we started from Tuttura before daylight; and splashing for the first hour through rice fields up to our knees in water, we gained the height on which the ill-fated Lugrassa stands. The sun had just risen, and we caught a view of the new settlement shining in its rays. The bungalows on the peaks of Landour, peeping through the trees that surrounded them several hundred feet above us, afforded a prospect of civilization that was highly delightful to us, after an absence of two months from such a scene. For the last ten days we have had rain every day; and have no reason, in consequence, to lament our having at length reached more substantial habitations than our tents have been able to afford. We have

frequently been compelled to pass the night sitting upon our bedding, which we had rolled up in a corner of the tent to prevent its getting wet from the heavy rain which dropped, (filtered, to be sure,) through the canvass upon it.

The entertaining variety of our roof being carried like a balloon into the air, while we were sleeping beneath it, had occurred too often to render it any longer amusing. The confusion such a catastrophe gives rise to, is too ludicrous to be viewed with much feeling of annoyance; although the few minutes that are necessary to struggle through the soaked canvass that promises to overwhelm you in your bed, are any thing but comfortable—there is so much that is amusing in the adventure after you have escaped, that the traveller who would lament meeting with it, must have very little taste for his occupation. Such scenes are merely rough enough to prove how vile a life of luxury and ease is, compared to such enjoyment of strength and hardihood.

The day was some time advanced, when we arrived near the village of Lugrassa; and I

thought there was an appearance of desolation about it. I saw no people within the village, and observed merely a few stragglers about the fields. Four or five men had died during the last week, and some before: such mortality would depopulate a mountain city in a month. Nothing can be more melancholy than a pestilence among these fragments of humanity; cut off from their fellow-mountaineers by high ridges, these isolated little communities are left to perish unknown and unmourned.

I have learned from some natives, who have lately been at Badri Nath, that that neighbourhood also has been ravaged by the cholera morbus. They cannot check the disease: it seizes them in all situations—in their houses—in the fields; and in a very few hours they are its victims. As the most hardy fall first, the infants, deprived of their protectors, should they escape the infection, must die of starvation. The cattle are abandoned, the crops neglected, and every traveller shuns the "city of the plague;" and even that precaution is no security. Pilgrims die in agony on the road: to enter one of these little

vales is indeed to enter "the valley of the shadow of death."—The inhabitants resign themselves to their destiny: the same fate would await them in a neighbouring village, perhaps, should they seek refuge there. They cling to their homes to the last gasp; and the survivor of a once happy people, where all were gay but a few days before, has to steal to his grave unnoticed, or roam elsewhere for human intercourse. Could the vision of "the Last Man" be ever realized, it would be in the highest habitations of the Himalaya mountains; for there many a little world is left for its last man to mourn over!

From the ridge where LUGRASSA stands, we descended to a stream, on the banks of which were many fine walnut-trees—the fruit was in great abundance, and fit to pluck: we had, from the base of the mountain at which it flowed, to make a most severe ascent to Landour, and in about three hours reached its summit. During the two months we had been absent from it, all the difficulties attending the establishment of a new colony had been skilfully overcome: the roads were finished, the houses were inhabited,

and the invalids had recovered, where recovery was reasonably looked for. Many additional visitors had arrived, and many bungalows were completed that had scarcely been thought of.

When we set out upon our expedition, the crest of the mountain, for nearly two miles, presented a populous and lively scene. The region, that not long ago was an unfrequented wilderness, is now charmed by society, and graced by refinement: wild jungles, and rugged rocks, have given way to flourishing gardens and comfortable buildings. So sudden has been the change, that Aladdin seems to have brought his wonderful lamp to effect it.

During the early part of the month of July it did not rain very much; the weather was pleasant and cool, the thermometer seldom varying from 70°. About the 20th, the rain became more frequent, and fell more heavily, and on the 30th, commenced in good earnest.

August 3rd.—A very violent storm of thunder and lightning came on yesterday about eight in the evening, while I was sitting in the verandah of a house on the commencement of

the *Missoura Ka Teeba* range. The noise of the thunder, as it pealed among the hills, was tremendous; and the rain that accompanied it fell in such torrents, that it threatened to overwhelm our bungalow and wash it down the rocky steep, on the edge of which it stood. The lightning was even more terrific—but so grand, that it was impossible to draw our eyes from the observation of its flashes of flame, as they shot through the woods and into the precipices. It is difficult to conceive a spectacle more sublime, or a tumult more appalling. From the closeness of the thunder-claps and the incessant return of the forked fire, we were convinced that we were in the midst of this fury, and frequently thought that we could hear the falling of the wood before the blasting stroke. It was a proper night for evil spirits to be abroad in. Not a being of our party could dare its violence: all the servants, whose structures were so much more flimsy than our own, had crept into the bungalow, and crouched beneath its verandahs wet and miserable. It seemed the only ark likely to float above the waters that threatened

to deluge us, and for a time we thought that it also must bow to the storm. It stood upon the crest of a rock, overlooking a deep valley, the descent to which was thickly wooded: behind was a similar abyss; and on the left hand a still more abrupt descent: on the right was a dark forest of oaks and rhododendron. Thus we stood in the midst of peril: and when huge masses of stone rolled down the steep without sound, we were disposed for a moment to think that we also might join the fall. The rain increased the rapidity of the few streams beneath us, and made them rumble away with tenfold noise. I do not think a lover of romance could have been placed in a more delightful situation for his excited fancy:

That night a child might understand  
The Devil had business on hand.

We survived the storm, however; and in the morning found that our imagination regarding the fall of the riven trees was correct enough: several were scattered about and displayed the lightning stroke. But the most material fall

was that of our goat-shed, which had been completely demolished ; and six goats and ten sheep lying dead beneath it, proved with what violence most of them had been killed by the fluid.

On our approaching the spot, we were attended by a host of hillmen, who watched our proceedings with great anxiety ; and when we desired that the carcasses of the animals should be thrown away, hastily interceded to save them for themselves, to have a feast upon. We very willingly granted the favour ; for in truth we could not envy them their food. Their swollen bodies did not deter them, on nearer approach, from attempting the meal, and they bore them off in triumph on their backs : they had been well fattened for our table, and perhaps the lightning stroke had sanctified them for theirs. Neither the goats nor the sheep of the plains have thriven very well during the wet weather in the hills : they all suffer from what is called, I believe, the foot-rot ; and no means that we can adopt have any effect in restoring them.

The sheep are now blind too, without any apparent cause—and consequently become use-



less; for they cannot be trusted to graze. The natives attempt to cure this last malady by chewing certain herbs, among which tobacco and some hot spices are mixed, and spitting the juice into the poor animals' eyes: it gives them great pain at the time of the operation, and seems to me rather calculated to extinguish any light that may yet remain, than restore that which they have lost. The poultry too are lost constantly from the same cause; but their fate is more sudden. While running in perfect health, they appear to be struck blind; and, staggering for an instant, fall dead. As it is an affair of some difficulty to keep a plentiful board, we cannot avoid being deeply interested in the state of our stock.

A great portion of this morning was passed in endeavouring to shoot some of the magnificent eagles, that soared in great number over the high peaks above us, and the deep precipices below. I have seen sometimes ten or twelve at a time, performing their airy evolutions in most beautiful style. At length, one fell, but it was not one of the largest: it measured nine feet from tip to

tip of its wings, and seemed to me to resemble very strongly the golden eagle of the Highlands of Scotland, some of which have been killed measuring eleven feet across their wings.

It is not a very easy matter to find amusement in to confined a spot as we are limited to; for if we make long excursions, we cannot, from the severe labour, return in the same day; we must therefore look nearer home. If we had a bridge to lounge upon, we should probably find the diversion of a recruiting-officer a very agreeable one; we have, however, invented a more manly exercise, and meet in groups on the greatest heights, to cast large stones down the precipices. As we take the field well armed with crow-bars, pick-axes, &c., we are fully prepared to launch tremendous weights; and, childish as it may appear, it is impossible to describe the rapture with which we hail the departure of our plaything, and watch its course as it bounds along, with a noise like thunder, carrying trees with it, or, if they be large enough to withstand its force, breaking into a hundred pieces, and leaping and rolling away in increasing fragments to the bottom.

I learned a curious instance this morning of trying the truth, by a test of bodily fortitude, which is not uncommon among some classes in the East. It arose from a charge that one hill-woman had brought against another. They were both wives of pioneer soldiers from the province of Sirmoor: and one accused her companion to the officer who commanded them, of having stolen several of her rings from her—the accused as stoutly denied it; and there was no circumstance on either side to direct the judgment. The charged thief, however, boldly declared that the other told a lie, and dared her to the ordeal. The challenge was readily accepted, and they were to hold their hands together in a vessel of boiling hot *ghie*, and whichever shrunk first was to be proclaimed foul and calumnious. What an admirable punishment would this be for slander in our own country!

There are some minor trials (the detail of which I do not exactly know) adopted upon these occasions: they increase in severity; if the lighter ones do not draw forth pain from the hardened sinners, they ascend to the next in gradation, till at length forced to cry out for

quarter. The hot *ghie* is, I believe, the highest proof; and these women, disdaining milder ones, determined at once to stake their veracity upon it. I believe the result was still unsatisfactory, for neither flinched; nothing more, however, was heard about the matter: they found it best to settle it out of court.

Quarrels are very frequent among the natives of both sexes; but not being of revengeful dispositions, they seldom reach beyond loud and angry words. In this mode of warfare, they are invincible. They excel greatly likewise in a spirit of detraction, and are prone to injure the characters of those with whom they quarrel, by exaggeration or invention. I have often witnessed this meanness among the lower classes; and whenever it is practised towards me, I listen quietly to all that is said by the first who gains my ear, against his enemy: taking an opportunity soon afterwards to converse with the abused one, I give him encouragement to paint the character of the other, and he generally reaches that drawn of himself. When I think the balance of lies is equal, I confront the

enemies; and relating what each said of the other, read them a lecture on their falsehoods, and recommend them not to give me the option of believing such tales against them.

To change from one evil passion to another, —I was astonished the other day by a very handsome pioneer sepoy, who approached his officer in the most soldier-like style, and, touching his cap, begged permission to cut his wife's nose off. His respectful manner, joined to the singular request, made it almost impossible to attend to him gravely, however serious the application seemed to be. He did not appear to me to be very anxious to perform the operation; it was a sacrifice, I conceive, to his honour. His wife had been faithless with a man of low caste, a Chumar, as he scornfully confessed; for this gave him a deeper pang than the fact of the dame's frailty—and he could not suffer her to carry the charms that caused his dishonour, uninjured, to draw him into fresh calamity.

A man, who asks his friend's advice about committing suicide, is not very likely to perform the act: in the same manner, the jealous hus-

band adopted the wisest plan of getting out of his dilemma. He bore the disappointment of a refusal with great firmness—although it was sad, he said, after having been married to him since she was twelve years of age, that she should now forsake him for a base Chumar. “Oh, what a falling off was there!”

We accompanied him to his tent to endeavour to reconcile the parties, and save the nose of the offending wife. She was an extremely pretty woman, and seemed to be dismayed at our approach: she had been weeping, and was now sitting in a disconsolate position, in a corner of the room: she had no children, but an elderly woman stood near her, who, from her concern, we conjectured was her mother. Alas! she had good cause to be concerned; for she had been the source of all the mischief. The true Mercury of the East, she had borne the tender messages from the base-born swain. The moment this little *dénouement* took place, the vengeance of the husband was transferred from his wife to her confidant: and had we not been by, I do not think he would have satisfied himself with

her nose only : she would scarcely have escaped with her head. Encouraged by our presence, she wagged her tongue most skilfully against him, while the poor wife seemed really to shed tears of bitter sorrow. We were at length able to reconcile the parties. The wife promised all the deepest repentance could promise, and the husband received her contrition, and restored her to his heart, from which indeed she could scarcely have been banished : for the delight with which he seized upon the old woman's conduct to exculpate his wife, proved how ready he was to forgive and trust again. We promised, however, that the presumptuous Sudra and his wicked messenger should be both banished from the mountains ; and the officer succeeded in obtaining their dismissal that very day.

I met them on their descent, an evil and a well-matched pair. The Lothario of the hills, whose gallantry had driven him from his high abode, was "a fellow with a horrid face," and a little crooked figure ; while the old woman was yellow and wrinkled to a degree. I should

have been happy to have contrived a match between them: it would have been a good and fitting punishment for the crimes that are now sending them, "with wandering steps and slow," to encounter the rains that are deluging the plains.

Such instances of severity among the Hindoos are not, I think, common. The punishment the soldier proposed would certainly have the effect of preventing a continuance of the crime, if beauty led to it; although, from what I have read and heard of the women, there would be no noses among them, if all met with their reward. I do not know how these judgments have been formed; but I am inclined to come to a very opposite one, and think those who have accused the female peasantry of the country of general immorality, have been rather hasty. I am disposed to be their champion for more beauty, cleanliness, and good conduct, than, under their great disadvantages, the most liberal could expect. Their exclusive mode of living among their own caste must prevent a



similar falling-off to the one that has given rise to these reflections.

It is impossible to view some members of the despised class without sorrow and pity, particularly those who are attached, in the lowest offices, to the establishments of the Europeans. They are the most melancholy race of beings, always alone, and apparently unhappy: they are scouted from the presence even of their fellow-servants. None but the mind of a poet could imagine such outcasts venturing to raise their thoughts to the beauty of a brahmin's daughter; and a touching tale in such creative fancy, no doubt, it would make—for, from their outward appearances, I do not perceive why they should not be endowed with minds as sensitive at least as those of the castes above them. There are among them some very stout and handsome men; and it is ridiculous to see sometimes all their strength devoted to the charge of a sickly puppy;—to take care of dogs being their principal occupation!

A great argument in favour of the fidelity of

the women is their voluntary sacrifice on the funeral pile of their lords. It is not very likely that the wife, who would deem it disgraceful to survive her husband, would offend against him while living.

A very appalling story of the madness of jealousy is related of an officer who was brought up in the Mahratta service, and in mature age came over to ours. He had three wives, and conceived suspicions against them all. Without explaining his motives, he desired them to meet him in his room one morning, attired in their richest apparel and most costly jewels. On entering, he is supposed to have commanded them to sink on their knees, and confess their wickedness. "Alas! what ignorant sin have we committed?" like unhappy Desdemona, was all that they could utter. Their furious Othello was as determined, and, without listening to their appeals to his mercy and his love, drew his sabre, and severed their heads from their bodies. The report of a pistol drew some of his attendants to the room; and, on breaking it open, they found the murderer and his misera-

ble victims dead and bathed in blood ! I never heard that any grounds were discovered for his horrible revenge ; nor indeed could any of the “ trifles light as air,” which grow so alarmingly in the jealous mind, be traced. I question whether the annals of any Turkish harem could afford a more terrible picture. In Turkey the husband slaughters from cruelty only ; however, he is not likely to sacrifice himself. Some honour may be allowed (a miserable one) to have moved this Indian murderer—as he did add himself to the number of the slain.

‘The easymode in which marriages are managed in the hills, makes the chances of jealousy very light indeed. The women, as I have before observed, have all the advantage on their side—a plurality of husbands ; for when so many men are satisfied to share in their affections, it is not very likely that their lives will be disturbed by “ the green-eyed monster.”

In some districts, or among some tribes in the hills, the women are privileged to divorce their husbands as often as they please : so a capricious dame may enjoy the mortification of all the men

of her village, if it could be possible to mortify such cold-hearted gentlemen. I never met but one husband who had really suffered under this custom. The man, who begged something to buy a petticoat for his wife, however, entertained serious apprehensions of such a fate, if we did not relieve him. The villager, who accompanied us as guide from Nongong to Burkotee, complained of his cruel fate, in having been married to, and divorced from, three or four wives: "And yet," he said, "I am young, have a good house, and possess more land than any other in the village." He had evidently volunteered to accompany us, for the purpose of telling his sad tale. He was a good-looking youth, seemed to be about twenty, and, after expatiating at some length on the perverseness of his fate, he besought my advice to teach him how to woo: I was too little acquainted with the feelings of the mountain maids to be a valuable confidant; but gave him all the consolation I could think of. When I told him, however, that my own experience would not assist him much, (for I had yet won no wife for myself,)

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throughout the twenty-four hours: so even a climate is rarely met with in any part of the world.

Although every thing is extremely damp, and we cannot obtain a glance of the sun, I do not find that people complain of colds or rheumatism, or any of the accompaniments of a moist atmosphere. On the contrary, every person boasts of his health, and praises the climate. In the morning, sometimes, we have a clear view of the snowy range to the north-east: the early riser may be rewarded by beholding the most beautiful sun-rise that the imagination can conceive—a chain of snow, reaching nearly from Cabul to Thibet, changing into all the colours that the growing day can paint! It would be difficult to match this scene in any other situation upon earth.

Towards the middle of September, the rain began to abate its force; a little still falling, however, in some quantity every day, and the temperature continuing still at 62°. The wet appears to be confined to the range bounding the

valley on which we are. For three days' journey inwards from this, there has been no fall for some time; and in the plains, the rainy season seems to have already broken up

## CHAPTER VII.

Descent from Landour—The rainy season—Police station—The Khere Pass—Sounds of revelry—Melancholy memorials—Peacocks—Village of Khere—Violent hurricane—Excursion through water—Rise of the Callinuddy—Goats rescued—Agreeable discovery—Holy water—Active preparations—Passage of the river—Night encampment—Deohund described—Fare of the Hindoos—Food of the Bengalese—A Turkish dinner—Begum Sunroo's troops—A stratagem—The disgraced General—Female tyrant—Baggage-bearers—Roads in Upper India—Kutowlee—Sneez, or Running footmen—Females at the well—Eastern custom—Meerut, a military station—Scarcity of women—Magnificent festival—Amusements at Meerut—Colonel Skinner's horse—Travelling in a palanquin—Eastern hyperbole—Ghaut of Ghurmohtear—Interior of a boat—Singular navigation—Farruckabad—Curious clock—Indigo factories—River scenery—Mahometan ceremonies—Cooking and eating—The lost keys—Crocodiles—Ghaut of Cawnpore—A budgerow—Boats at Cawnpore—Moored vessels—General clamour—Attractions of a bazaar—Appearance of native towns—Soldiers' wives, &c.—Hospital transport—Amazonian fleet.

SEPT. 22nd.—At length the day arrived for quitting these delightful regions, and descending to the sultry plains once more. It had ceased



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At the foot of the hills we found our horses and camels; and, trying to forget the freedom of the upper world, commenced our journey this morning to Dehra at daylight, in order that we might be under cover before the sun rose. We had no sooner reached the tope of trees we had pitched upon for our resting-ground than the most heavy rain commenced, accompanied by thunder and lightning. Our tents were not able to keep it out; and we apprehended every moment being unroofed. We now discovered how premature we had been in our descent; but it was too late to retrieve the error, and we were obliged to continue. I have before noticed how melancholy a thing a rainy day is under canvass, particularly such flimsy affairs as we are reduced to, for we have not been able to replace our mountain tents, and the water trickles through them in every direction.

Our abodes resemble good-sized shower-baths; and we are forced to sit the best part of the day with umbrellas over our heads. Wise people never venture into tents until the rainy season is completely at an end; for, independently of the

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tent pitched near the sun d  
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the Dismal, where there is  
jungle. It is not easy to  
the season of the year, and  
danger of it.

We determined, therefore  
instead of remaining the night  
the entrance to the Kibira  
one to that which we had  
erred, about nightfall, at a  
of a small screen, the moon  
lunar, and had our tents  
was very wild around. On  
hind us, prettily embosomed  
native huts: there was no  
but down the face of the  
wood, which seemed to have

police station on the inner side of the valley; and an important-looking personage, with a broad scarlet belt over his shoulders, and a large brass breast-plate upon it, on which was engraved his office, superintended the department.

Rough crags overhung the little river, in which our servants caught a few fish; and all seemed to indicate the pass by which a sortie from the Dhoon was to be made: so narrow was the mouth, that it might have been closed with gates of iron, like the Happy Valley of Rasselas. If, with all the blandishments that were lavished upon him, however, he wished to escape from it, it is no wonder that in the present state of our valley, we were very loth to continue longer among its beauties; for with beauties it most undoubtedly abounds. The nearest resemblance I can find to its general appearance in the East, is in some of the wildest scenes in the interior of Ceylon. Its rough crags, rapid streams, wooded hills, and long grass, all remind me of that island; and there are in that isle some of the loveliest scenes in nature:

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for the cries of Comus and his crew ; for with such noises,

“ night by night,  
He and his monstrous rout are heard to howl—”

and,

“ Within the bosom of this hideous wood -”

he might have found a fitting cover for his evil doings.

On emerging from our winding dell, however, how were our fairy fancies put to flight, when we perceived a string of three palanquins, from the grunting bearers of which proceeded all the “ tumultuous mirth,” that had come to

“ Invade the silence of these lonely shades.”

There were about forty half-naked figures, some under the poles of the palkees, while the others were scattered wildly about, splashing through the water, and howling with the perseverance of jackals. As it was very soon after daylight, some of their torches were still alight, and added to the singularity, and almost barbarity of the scene.

We found acquaintances in the palanquins—

an officer of the civil service, and his family, on their way to Landour. There was no time for long parley, and we soon lost sight of each other. The noise of the bearers continued for some time to resound among the hills, and we were loth to believe that we were not still travelling upon enchanted ground.

On leaving the passage of the hills, we found the water diminish, but the road continued as stony as ever. The sun was now up, and we halted to breakfast, and spent the heat of the day more in the jungle than we had even done the night before. We were without the hills that close in the Dhoon, but in the midst of the Saul forest, through which I had hunted some time before. We could not move fifty yards from our little tent without losing ourselves in the midst of swampy ground and long grass, with the probability of furnishing a repast to some tiger; for this spot had all the appearance of being thickly inhabited by them; and close to us was a melancholy memorial of the death of some traveller or huntsman by one—a loose heap of stones, with a long bamboo rising from

the centre of it, with a small white pennant floating at its taper point. Such remembrancers of mortality are sufficiently startling in the midst of the forest ; and the solitary traveller, as night draws round him, suddenly coming upon one, is not likely to have his meditations improved as he pursues his weary way.

We found, towards the afternoon, that our servants and beasts of burden were so tired, that we must pass the night at this place, where we had only meditated remaining during the heat of the sun. The day had gone, and the night soon passes in this country ; so we did not repine much at the calamity. Our people were alarmed at the prospect of being disturbed by tigers, and made every preparation for keeping large fires, which blazed away during the whole night. The cry of the jackal and the scream of the hyena were all the disturbance we met with.

Again at daylight we mounted our horses, and followed a narrow track through the jungle, for above two hours: under foot it was soft sand, and we got on famously. Upon emerging from the woods, we passed over a plain, in



which several hundred peacocks at least were feeding. It is impossible to conceive a more beautiful scene: they were all in fine feather, and many were strutting about with the greatest vanity. Our appearance soon spoiled their amusement, and drove them scampering in every direction. None of them, I observed, took to the wing; but they all ran so fast, that we soon lost sight of them.

We had now completely reached the plains, and found our tents pitched close to the village of Khere, upon a bare field, with not a tree to shield them from the hottest sun I ever felt. It was impossible to continue all day here; and observing a large peepul-tree at a great distance, we instantly emigrated towards it, and sat beneath the shadow of its branches while our equipage was moving. It was near this village that we had encamped when on our tiger excursion in the spring; and, nothing daunted by the *contretemps* of the Puncala's ee's, i's, and o's, we resolved upon trying the same route again: about eight o'clock at night, while the moon was shining brightly, we despatched two

camels towards that place, meaning to set out for it ourselves the next morning at daylight.

The night was the most clear and lovely I ever remember to have seen; but, as if doomed to witness a storm in this neighbourhood, about two in the morning the most violent hurricane arose and nearly laid us flat: fortunately, however, the shelter of the tree preserved us. The rain drove into our tents in every direction and with the utmost fury: our baggage and the poor servants' clothes were flying before the wind; and our hitherto peaceable little party was scattered, like doves before the eagle. I was obliged to rise from my bed, and fold up my bedding, as I had before done; then sit upon it, and hold an umbrella over me. The storm lasted for more than an hour: it was impossible to rest after it, and we were up and ready to start before daylight; doubtful of the road, however, we thought it prudent to remain until we could see perfectly.

At first, we found the path tolerably good over the fields, among which we had encamped: coming suddenly, however, into long grass, we

did not perceive the quantity of water on the ground, till we had got so deeply involved in it, we found it impossible to proceed with safety, and difficult to retire. We urged our horses on; the water soon reached their girths, and we became almost lost in a wide sea. There were no landmarks, we may really say, to guide us. We waded up and down, and knew not which way to stir: there were many corses that held their heads higher than anything in the neighbourhood; and to these we rode, or almost swam, in hopes that we might find dry ground to rest on, in order to recover our strength and collect our thoughts, but always without effect.

The sun was now growing very hot, and still we were in the midst of a waste of waters. We began to feel serious apprehensions: we had so completely lost the path, that to return was as impossible as to proceed; we determined, therefore, upon coming to a halt, and exercising our lungs for a rescue. We had halloo'd, I am sure, for half an hour, when we heard a sound so faint, it resembled a distant echo of our own

voices. We repeated our shouts, however, and at length were answered more distinctly: still we could see nothing; yet our friend, or the spirit of the waters, shrieked—we were not very clear which. Screaming with all our might, however, we moved in the direction of the voice; praying that there might be no vocal Will-o'-the-wisp to plague us. We had the good fortune, as we approached, to find the responsive shout grow louder and louder; and at length perceived a faquir with a long pole in his hand, up to his waist in water. He told us that he was on the right path, and that we should never have reached our destination if we had not fallen in with him. We were willing to believe this, for we found that we had wandered nearly half an hour from the proper road, and were likely to continue in error all the day, if we had not fallen in with this devout personage, whose return from pilgrimage proved a matter of great importance to us. He had been to Kedar Nath and Gungoutri, and we looked upon him as a fellow-wanderer.

We moved slowly behind him; and, with the

assistance of his long pole, and his great knowledge of the country, he was enabled to keep us on the right path. We were more than an hour before we got completely out of the watery desert: we then entered upon a tract of land where the water had been, and over which we found it still more difficult to move. It was a perfect marsh, in which we sunk to the horses' knees every step: in attempting to lead them we found matters even worse; for then both ourselves and horses stuck in the mud.

I made a resolution that this should be positively the last time of my visiting Puneeta; this place was evidently not intended for me. When we escaped from the marsh, and reached the banks of the Callinuddy, a small stream over which we expected easily to ford, we were dismayed by seeing our camels lying down on the near bank. They had been nearly drowned, the drivers assured me, during the night, and had reached that spot at daylight, and found the river so swollen by the rain, that it was impossible to pass over.

It was nearly eleven o'clock; so we had been

from daylight travelling five miles. The stream was still so deep and so rapid, that I saw but little prospect of getting through it. My goat-herd had, some time before my arrival, carried the goats to some distance above the stream, growing tired I suppose of waiting on this bank, while there was a tempting village on the opposite side. In a few minutes the poor animals came down the river at a tremendous rate, bleating most miserably. Their inconsiderate shepherd, fancying that a wind in the river, which caused the waters to bear to the opposite bank, would have swept them across, entrusted them to their fortune: they went crying down the stream, however, with very little prospect of being saved. There was a general pursuit: my brother and myself, being the only mounted ones of the party, galloped our unhappy horses, almost dead with fatigue, along the banks; while all the footmen we could muster, flying with their utmost speed, nearly kept up with us. They were armed with long sticks, which the natives generally carry when travelling, and shouted loudly to encourage the poor goats to draw to the bank. It was

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it had a small one on the water-side,) and there was a landing-place a little without it.

From the place we chose to start from (which was considerably above the stream,) to this ghaut, was about three hundred yards: we found it was necessary to swim our horses across; and so great a struggle had we to gain the proposed point, that I began to despair of ever getting the camels over. About the middle of the stream was a capsized bullock hackery, which had been laden with soda-water for the refreshment of some gentleman in the Dhoon. We discovered a few stone bottles, that had been saved from it, and were too thirsty to stand upon ceremony with it. It was a most timely discovery; and the popping of the corks served as an amusement to the villagers, who had by this time assembled in great numbers about us. It was the first time, perhaps, they had ever seen "*bhullathe pancee*," or English water, as I may venture to call it; for that word is generally applied to every thing that comes from our country.

A native servant once asked me gravely, if



all the while in *Tagara* bubbled and sparkled  
in the sun's beams. The Hindoos, who, to all  
ages & in every clime their holy Ganges the  
sacred and inviolable, should have a higher  
value of it in carrying the water of our own  
country about with us, the Mahometans too  
have their reasons. The head man of the vil-  
lage, *Maun*, in that before very long the river  
would go over so far as to allow our baggage  
to pass, and that he should find plenty of pro-  
prietors to pay the passage. We determined,  
therefore, to wait quietly in the most sheltered  
spot we could find, till it was cool enough to  
expedite the ferry. He led us to the banks  
of a small lake, above which stood a very pretty  
pagoda, with a flight of steps from its porch to  
the water, which seemed to be the common bath  
of the whole village: behind it was a thick  
grove of mango-trees, through which the sun  
had never penetrated. All was so still and un-  
frequented during the heat of the day, that  
Diana and her nymphs might have selected  
this spot for their diversions; and we were so  
tired, that we could scarcely have moved from

our shady retreat to have interrupted them by our curiosity.

A little before three o'clock, our servants began to creep in, and announced that the whole of the camels had arrived on the opposite bank of the river, which had fallen so much, that there was every chance of their crossing it before six o'clock. We were not sorry to receive this addition to our party, and commenced active preparations for breakfast, which we had not yet been able to effect. Between four and five we made our appearance on the banks of the river; and, although it was still very rapid, I thought it had subsided sufficiently to enable all to get across. Camels are most helpless in deep water, and it is not uncommon for them to turn completely over on their sides—a feat they had performed two or three times in the course of their journey from Khere in the morning. All my things were wet; and a number of stuffed birds, the Monal and horned pheasant of the mountains, were so spoiled, I was obliged to throw them away.

The passage of the river presented an active

scene. We had enlisted all the people of the village into the operations, making them carry over the lighter things upon their heads: while three or four men were attached to the sides of each camel, as guides and protectors. After a great deal of preliminary screaming and scolding, we got our little army fairly launched, with the first division of baggage: in a little more than an hour, we managed to get the whole of it over, without any loss or accident.

We are about five miles from where we passed last night, and we have been just two-and-twenty hours in making the journey. Our tents were pitched among the mango-trees beside the lake, and the quiet retreat for the goddess of the chase was soon converted into a scene of bustle and uproar: fires blazed in every direction, and cakes and curry were being moulded quickly into shape. The head man of the village, who had paid us devoted attention through the whole of our difficulties, was resolved that we should be well watched during the night. He posted a string of Chhookedars round our encampment, and one at the door of each tent. Thieves were not likely

to be favoured by the night in their researches, for the moon was beautifully bright : however, these croaking persons were, I have no doubt, of great use.

It was too hot to sleep ; and as I kept the curtain of my tent up, I was amused by their figures, and the loud grunts that proceeded from them. They sat upon their hams in the same spot all night, covered with blankets that concealed their bodies, and gave them the appearance of round jars, while their heads alone seemed moveable ; and, indeed, covered with large folds of cloth, they might have passed for the mouths of the jars. If they had been drawn up in a line, they would have tempted the fate of the "forty thieves," had any adventurous Morgiana been by.

Sept. 8th.—Before daylight we struck our camp, and proceeded towards the now celebrated Puncala, at least to me. It was distant twelve coss ; and we proposed breakfasting midway, and sending our caravan on, if we could find a tope of trees to sit in. We took great care not to wander in quest of the many villages we had

before become acquainted with, nor to ring the changes upon the finite vowels in so incessant a manner as that promised to be. We traversed a long and weary plain: there were few trees, and no villages of importance enough to appear more than small mounds of earth; for the houses are generally of that colour, being built of unbaked bricks, (*cutchā*, as they are termed in Hindostanee,) and having walls of mud round them.

When we had ridden about twelve miles, we perceived, in the neighbourhood of a tolerably sized village, through the street of which we passed, a plantation of some extent: a portion of it seemed to be a garden of fruit-trees, with a smooth lawn beneath: there was a well in the midst of it, and we breakfasted and passed the heat of the day under the shelter of the branches. There were a great many fine peepul-trees in the neighbourhood, that gave food to the camels, which halted awhile to bait.

Nothing can exceed the tameness of a journey at this season of the year through the wide plains of Upper India; and to us, who had just

left the most majestic and beautiful scenery in the world, and who had passed through a region of romance almost to reach it, the effect was sad beyond description. There is nothing in one of these tremendous plains to relieve the eye, either by its verdure or its form; and the villages being, as I have before observed, of a clay colour, are more unpleasant to look upon than even the long fields.

The husbandmen in these provinces were obliged formerly to add the office of soldier to their more peaceable one, and all the villages were surrounded by high walls of mud, which generally approached in shape to a square, having a tower or bastion at each angle, with a large gate in the centre of one of its faces. Within, the streets are very narrow, and the houses low and dark: the shops have a small terrace or verandah in front, the floor of which is kept very clean: and there the merchant sits with his commodities about him. I do not think the towns are generally conspicuous for cleanliness in their streets, although I believe the

rooms (if such they may be called) are sufficiently neat and proper.

There is always enough to offend the nose, as well as the ears and the eyes. Miserable half-starved dogs are to be seen at all times trying to rake out some stinking food from the heaps of dirt that are piled up at the end of a street; and when the wind blows, the chaff and the dust are driven about at a terrible rate; and the flies are beyond all number. In such villages as the one I am now near, the inhabitants are generally agriculturalists, and they do not carry on any great traffic; their shops, therefore, are very few. No place, however small, is without a proportion of every trade: there is always a smith, a carpenter, leather-dresser, barber, &c., and about the smiths' shops may be seen various loungers, gossiping and watching the sparks, as in more refined villages; for I fancy the forge has been the great rendezvous for village politicians.

The smiths' apparatus is very simple: they have no bellows, but use a small fan to kindle a

flame; and the whole smithy might be transported from house to house in the hands of the blacksmith. In paring the hoof of a horse, the farriers use a weapon so blunt and so awkward, that you tremble while you witness the operation. They always put the shoe on cold: but too often, instead of fitting it to the foot, rasp it down to the size of the shoe, placing a round piece of wood under it, and making the animal rest his foot upon it. They sit under his body with the foot between their legs; and surveying it leisurely, rasp away until it is reduced to the wooden model, which, like the shoe of one Chinese lady, must be able to fit the whole nation. We passed an undisturbed day among the trees we had chosen for our retreat; and in the cool of the evening rode over to Punnecala, where we dined and passed the night.

This morning we pursued the same road that we had done before, and reached the banks of the Tank near Deobund. We rode through the town, the principal street of which was very long and narrow, with tolerably good shops on each side. The houses were high, some having



lateral projections to their upper stories; and they were generally built of baked bricks. The town is also walled, but these defences being no longer necessary, are not kept in very good repair; which circumstance may be recorded as a compliment to the British government. "Now every man shall eat in safety, under his own vine, what he plants."

Not to be annoyed or disturbed was all we desired during these hot days: we sought no adventures or incidents therefore, and none occurred to us. Although upon the high road, we saw no travellers, and only occasionally heard the creaking noise of a bullock-carriage, so show that some beings were awake besides ourselves. The period of the hot winds may be made comfortable in tents from the use of tatties; but it is impossible to mitigate the violence of autumnal heat, the season in which the rains break up. There was not a breath of air the whole day, and no rain having fallen for at least two or three nights, the ground was dry and parched, and the sand, of which the soil is composed, dazzled the eyes, and reflected the heat tenfold.

There was not a bird to be seen or heard, and the very flies seemed to share in the general oppression: the restless motion and incessant hum of the mosquitoes alone prevented the perfect torpor we might otherwise have fallen into. All the servants and followers were happily fast asleep beneath the shadow of the surrounding trees; and the melancholy face of a camel, as its lower jaw moved slowly up and down in the act of chewing the cud, its teeth sometimes grinding, as if by accident it had missed the object of its rumination, was the only proof (a most withering one) of life being still in the midst of our little camp.

Never was the rising of the sun so prayed for during a stormy night, as its setting is by us through the glare of day; and most sudden and delightful are the effects of that moment upon us. Then every one arises, and all creatures seem to grow alive again: fires are kindled and dinners cooked, and the various casts assume their picturesque position and interesting occupations.

The Hindoos have always been called ex-

These animals, and indeed are held up as  
models of excellence. but I know no race of  
man who does their deeds more, and think  
not about them. Their food is simple enough,  
and the quantity they are able to consume at  
one time is surprising. The deliberate manner  
in which a *Vilvitis* feeds himself shows that he  
considers the operation as one of first-rate im-  
portance. In cases all tried before him, with a  
cup of warm milk of water by his side, he  
scoops down and chomping large pieces into  
his mouth in rapid succession, he never has it  
empty a moment. When his appetite flags, he  
will never sit at table as he is to accomplish the  
digestion of all the cakes he has prepared.  
The custom now he washes his cooking-vessels,  
fills a gourd brimful of water, and, throwing  
himself back, scatters it to the four corners of the  
room, and falls fast asleep, very fre-  
quently accompanied by the process.  
One of our hunters never makes less than twelve  
large cakes for himself, each being nearly an  
inch thick, and more than half a foot in dia-  
meter, all of which he consumes with the most

astonishing perseverance. These cakes are made of coarse uncleaned flour, and baked upon a tin plate; and are indeed not unlike the girdle cakes of the highlands of Scotland, which should be the classical food to one acquainted with the legends of that country, and as fond of them as I am.

Those who can afford a more expensive food, generally live on rice mixed with a yellow grain called dhól, and made savoury with sauces and pickles. The Bengalese are much annoyed in the upper provinces, where the price of rice is too high for them to enjoy their favourite food; and are a long time before they become perfectly reconciled to the wheaten cake. Dining, with these, is a more elaborate affair than with the former; for they have to knead their food into small round balls with their fingers and thumb, before they can venture to taste it; and the neatness with which they effect this, and the dexterity with which they pop the little balls into their mouths, is above all praise.

I looked with some interest at this ceremony when I first observed it, from the remembrance

of my complete failure, when dining *à la Turque* on the river Nile, in the same feat. It was at the table of the French Colonel Séve, Sulciman Beh, who has since become well known as second in command to Ibrahim Pacha in the Morca. He was kind enough to invite us all to his boat, which had stopped for the night close to the ruins of Thebes. He had assembled all the functionaries of his army; for he was on his way to Assouan to bring a portion of the newly-organized troops down towards Cairo, with a view, it was rumoured, of having them ready for an expedition against the Greeks. His *état-major* formed a singular group: there were two or three elderly men, with fine black beards, as grave and quiet as Turks ought to be: while the spirit of the party was centred in a middle-aged, florid-faced hero, with blue eyes and light brown mustachios. He was the drum-major-general of the army, and annoyed us all night with practising upon the table a row-dow-dow, as noisy, if not as correct, as any drummer in Christendom could devise. We sat cross-legged round a table, on which the first dish that ap-

peared was vermicelli soup; and, alas! no spoons: this was succeeded by a species of curry, followed by spinach and eggs; and our discomfort was complete. We were obliged to partake of it, and I shudder at the recollection, how "the silver skin was laced with the golden" stream!

September 26th.—At daylight, as usual, we were on horseback, and had the advantage of a rainy ride to Muzuffernugger, which place we reached about seven o'clock. We found here an encampment of the Begum Sumroo's troops from Serdhana. She was not among them, but was expected in a few days, on an excursion through her province. Their tents were rather carelessly arranged; and their general slovenliness did not speak much in favour of their commander's discipline. He was an Italian by birth, Signor Raggolini, and had married an adopted daughter of the Begum's: he had been some time in this country, and entered her service very soon after his arrival. He is not a very military-looking person, and makes a poor picture by the side of his troops, who are generally fine, stout-looking

men. his dress, too, is as opposite as possible to theirs: a sky-blue jacket, looped in every direction with silver, decks his yellow little person; while a long caftan of quilted cotton, of a dirty brown colour, with turbans and sashes of white, forms the uniform of his army; trowsers, down to the ankles, generally of the same material as the rest, with tremendous russety-coloured shoes, bending upwards from the toe to a great height.

These troops carry swords and matchlocks; and, although they have not a very elegant appearance, when scattered about in small knots, the sentinels lounging on their posts, they look extremely wild and picturesque. In addition to this Signor Raggolini, (whose name, by-the-bye, the natives corrupt into an unfortunately appropriate one, "Ragged-an'-lean Sahib,") the bigum has an aid-de-camp, a Captain Disc, the son of a former general by an adopted daughter also, I believe. He is a half-caste; and his father was factotum to her highness not long ago, but she quarrelled with him upon some trifling matter, and dismissed him her service, and forbade him her presence. After several

vain attempts to recover her favour, he established himself in one of her houses at Meerut, where she usually resides. She was determined to dislodge him; but he resolutely kept his ground. A native prince, or princess, is never at a loss for stratagem, and she had recourse to it. To draw the fox, she pretended to pardon him, and expressed great anxiety to see him once more. The general was too delighted at the prospect of reconciliation, and readily embraced her proposal for an audience. At twelve o'clock, the day after the message, by her appointment, he presented himself at the palace gate, when his entrance was opposed by her guard, who told him her highness had resolved never to see him again, and desired that he should instantly retire. Disappointed and indignant, he returned to his former abode: and there, "unkindest cut of all!" he was met by another party of the guard, who had been sent round by a different road to take possession of the house during his absence! "The begum desires never to see you more," was again thundered in his ears, and so he was ejected from his



last hold. After having served her faithfully all his life, he was driven forth, to reflect, in his old age, on the vanity of putting trust in princes.

So resolute a dame as Begum Sumroo is not likely to be moved by pity or remorse. If all the stories told of her be true, it is a strange sight to see the honour and attention she meets with from a Christian society. Many of the worst tales are currently believed, particularly that sad one of her stretching a carpet over the ground, beneath which two female slaves were buried alive. She smoked her pipe coolly, it is said, until she thought they were dead; afraid, if she had moved from the spot, that more tender-hearted people might have rescued them. In the present age, when these horrors are supposed to live in story alone, it is difficult to believe such cruelty possible. When confronted with the gay and smiling countenance of the perpetrator of them, we may really say, though from a very different cause, "Look in her face, and you forget them all," for a more lively old dame is not to be found. I have heard many instances of her bounty as well as of her cruelty;

and I believe the Europeans about her person have no cause to be dissatisfied with her generosity. She is, however, a female Djazzar Pacha, and has all the caprice as well as the barbarity of a tyrant.

To descend to an inferior race of women:— we had moved so quickly, that it was necessary to lighten our camels, by having a portion of the baggage carried by bearers; and men being scarce, we were forced to enlist females into our train. Although they were well loaded, we did not consider it a reproach to our gallantry; for stouter or more masculine damsels were never yet seen. They are tall and straight, with a smooth skin of a bright chestnut colour: a blue cotton boddice, which just reached below their bosoms, and a petticoat of the same fastened above the hips, (a long brown interval between the two garments,) formed their dress. They carry their loads upon their heads; and, holding themselves perfectly upright, move with the greatest quickness, swinging their bodies as the Irish women do, who carry fruit into Covent Garden market from the gardens in the neigh-

bourhood of London. They are as good humoured and talkative as their western prototypes; and, following each other in a string, laugh and jest with all their might. The male bearers seldom utter any sound in the course of their journeys, but a dismal grunt; the women have by far the advantage in lungs and spirits. in complexion and features they resemble very strongly the gipsies in our own country; and from their lively eyes and reckless expression, they seem to bear a close affinity to that sooth-saying race. Their pay for the day's journey is very trifling; and, without waiting to rest, the moment they received it, they tramped off again, although they had travelled well laden for nearly twenty miles.

Muzaffernugger is thirty-six miles from Meerut; and we determined to make the journey in one day, leaving our followers to finish it at their leisure. A gig was to meet us at Kutowlee, a walled town about sixteen miles on the road; and we could drive on, in defiance of the sun. At two in the morning, when the moon was at its height, we mounted, and moved for

an hour along a very sandy track, with nothing for the eye to rest on, nor (what was still worse) to receive the rays of the moon. It was like riding over a desert.

There are no regularly defined roads throughout the upper provinces of India. They all appear to have been made by accident; and even with the light that we had, it was necessary to be careful of the stepping of our horses. The path was of soft sand, and the ruts made by the bullock-carriages, (the only wheeled conveyances that pass over them,) were frequently more than a foot deep. Before the day had dawned, we rode into the gate of Kutowlee. As in all native towns, the streets are very narrow and winding; and it behoves the traveller to keep a careful watch upon the direction he takes in passing through them, lest he be lost in the labyrinth. Although as quiet as death, it by no means had the appearance of a deserted village; it seemed, nevertheless, like one that was fast falling into depopulation. It required no great effort of imagination, to fancy that it had been visited by the plague; for human bodies,

apparently lifeless, lay stretched in every direction through its lanes; and the only sound, besides the echo of our horses' feet, was an occasional snore, I think I must call it, which, aided by the night and the scene, might well have been mistaken for a dying moan.

It is the custom of the natives, at the warm season of the year, to sleep very much in the open air; and as they were scattered in all directions about, some on charpoys, (common cots,) and some on mats spread upon the ground, wrapped up in white cotton sheets, their very heads covered as if in their shrouds, the ride through their fallen ranks had something (coming suddenly upon them, as we had from a wide waste) startling in it. We found it necessary to move with great care, lest we should unfortunately rouse them more roughly than we would have wished.

The tatties, or mat frames, that generally close in the fronts of the houses during the night, were all open as they are by day, when, propped up by poles, they serve the purpose of verandahs. The goods which lay upon the

little terraces for sale, were moved to the inner apartments; and the children and old men occupied their places. There is a small serai in the town, at the door of which we found our saees, or groom, just arisen from performing his ablutions, and by his side a wrinkled old woman, who had the charge of the establishment, engaged in a similar occupation. She was pouring water into her hand, from a brass vessel; and so washing her face, in the deliberate, though not quite in the graceful manner of a cat. I was forcibly reminded, by the mode in which she 'dighted her grunzie,' of a similar allusion in one of Burns's songs:

Auld Baudron by the ingle sits,

And wi' her loof her face a washin.

The groom had performed this part of the ceremony, and was now sitting by the old crone, who certainly might have rivalled 'Willie's wife,' and was engaged in rubbing his teeth with a small twig of lime, in the most lack-a-daisical manner that can be conceived. I am

afraid it is not quite delicate to introduce a scene at the toilette, but this forms as striking a picture of native manner, as either their cooking or their sleeping. We soon disturbed the groom; and, entering the buggy, drove towards Meerut, plunging, as we best could, through the deep sand, the saees running lightly by our sides. 'This part of their occupation is a most toilsome one: they are expected to keep up with a horse at a good trot; and generally manage it very well by laying hold of some portion of the carriage, contriving very dexterously to keep clear of the wheel in its motion, in the manner I have seen a dog, fastened to the axle of a cart, dodge about to avoid the heels of the horse.

Soon after we left Kutowlee, we saw the sun arise—a sight by no means uncommon in the East, (as all are early risers,) but always strikingly beautiful. From the bounds of these wide plains it rises nearly as suddenly as at sea, and there is not a preceding or following tint that is lost to the eye. The moment, however, that it is fairly in the sky, there is an end of

beauty: no hills, nor even woods, to soften its approach; it is too bright to look at, and a great deal too hot to bear.

At seven o'clock we reached Doolah, and found a horse waiting beneath a wide tree at the entrance to the village: near was a large well, at which all the damsels had assembled to draw their morning supply of water. Nothing can be more picturesque, and to our fancies more thoroughly oriental, than the moment, when "the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water." Their graceful robes and fine straight figures, with the various positions in which they are arranged, make the most interesting picture possible—some approaching with their empty pitchers lying on the sides upon their shoulders, while their children sit astride their hips: others return laden, with the pitchers on their heads, supported by the right hand, while the left is ready to draw the veil over the face lest any stranger should approach.

Round the well the utmost activity prevails. The one in this village is of brick, and from its sides rise several pieces of wood, like cranes, with





and when I returned it, merely emptied out the water I had left, and rubbed it over with sand, deeming a purification of some sort still absolutely necessary.

We soon changed horses, and pushed on for Meerut. Although approaching the largest military station in Upper India, the roads became worse as we drew near; and after jolting over the most despicable track for nearly two hours, we entered the broad plain on which that cantonment stands. It sometimes happens that the roads in the neighbourhood of a post are in tolerably good order, but these are exceptions; for no greater pains are taken by Europeans than by the natives in the approaches to their stations.

It is now the month of October, and the cold season has commenced, which is generally the period of gaiety and amusement. We have dinners, plays, and balls, and a large society, (about two hundred perhaps,) with, however, an overwhelming majority of men. The early complaint of our settlers in India may still be reasonably urged in the upper provinces—that there are no means of becoming husbands: in Meerut, which,

as I have said, is the largest station, there is but one unmarried lady. "But one halfpenny-worth of bread to this intolerable deal of sack!"—for I fancy there are at least one hundred and fifty single men. It too frequently happens that the posts, in the upper provinces, are without even that solitary temptation to a change of state; and to this, doubtless, many of the unfortunate connexions European officers have formed may be ascribed. The desolate situations young men are often reduced to, placed by themselves in remote districts, with no family within many miles, and no prospect of returning to England till at least declined into the vale of years, are almost enough to make them forget that they have a "home beyond the sea," deeply as that circumstance is generally inscribed upon the heart. I have often been amused at half-caste people, and those of a nearer approach to European, who, I think, are styled country-born, talking of England as their home. "I should like to go home" sounds singularly enough from the lips of one whose complexion might rival ebony: it is well that it should be so, however,

while the half-caste population is so rapidly increasing.

While writing of ladies, I may venture, *en passant*, to notice some of the customs of society, in which they are materially concerned. It is natural to suppose, that being in so small a proportion they must receive great attention, and it is but right that they should. I was much amused, the first large assembly I was ever present at, in the country, by the great sensation that was created in the company on the arrival of a carriage of ladies. I went somewhat early, and had scarcely time to look about me, when a servant ran into the room, in breathless haste, and, placing his hands together, muttered something to his master, who instantly rushed out of the chamber, followed by a train of gentlemen. The suddenness of the movement, and the important expression of the messenger's countenance, threw me into some alarm: if it had not been the midst of summer, I should have fancied the house had been on fire. In a moment, however, the fugitives returned, each bringing in a lady. They had barely time to conduct them to the

seats allotted for them, when another summons called them forth once more: the plot now began to thicken, and all took part in the race. Carriage after carriage arrived, and gentlemen and servants were running wildly along the hall, breathless and intolerably hot.

The ladies sit quietly in their carriages till the proper announcement has called the gentlemen to their assistance. Although the society is unquestionably very delightful, I think the strict etiquette preserved even in the houses of private individuals might be very advantageously dispensed with. It is a great nuisance to have your lot so firmly fixed in society as not to be able to change it even from inclination or inadvertency, without giving offence. Although these precise arrangements are very much confined to those of the highest offices, yet still the spirit of place pervades all ranks a great deal too much. I was a member of a committee to regulate a large hall on a particular occasion, when it occupied the greater part of a day to settle the order of our going into supper: we found ourselves sitting as a Committee of Privileges. At length, a regular

table of precedence was made out, and delivered to those gentlemen whose good fortune had cast them in a parallel rank with the ladies who were to grace the assembly, and who, to say truth, must very frequently have found themselves most uncongenially suited. Nothing can exceed the style in which such entertainments are given, even in situations so distant from the capital as Meerut. Native ingenuity, however, is not called forth to assist in the decorations, as it is with so much effect in the more southern parts of the East.

The most beautiful festival I ever witnessed was given some time ago near Columbo, by Sir Edward Barnes, then governor of the island of Ceylon. The Cingalese are famous for the manner of their light and ornamental buildings: in the course of twenty-four hours they garnish a palace that may remind you of the genii of the Arabian Nights. On the banks of the river near Columbo, and three miles above the stream from the usual point of embarkation, a splendid ball-room was built, so tastefully decorated, that it resembled a fairy palace: the pillars that sup-

ported the roof were covered with slips of the ola, which gave them the appearance of being fluted, an interval being left between each row, while the capitals were of plaintain leaves and boughs of the ola interspersed, approaching nearly to the natural Corinthian: the roof was thatched with lemon grass; and within were columns and arches of the lightest and most fanciful appearance. Variegated lamps hung in festoons round the room, and, winding about the pillars, shone from among the flowers that encircled them, like bright jewels: a bridge of boats led from the opposite bank of the river to the banqueting-hall. At each end of it was a magnificent gate, and in the centre a triumphal arch; while on each side was a parapet hung with lamps and flowers and branches of the most graceful of the palm-trees. The company moved up the stream in large flat-bottomed boats towed by elephants; and nothing could surpass the beauty of the scene.

It was a little before sunset when the ceremony began; but the return at night was beyond description magnificent; the vessels were

carried down by the stream, and floated away with sufficient irregularity : in two or three were stationed bands of music, that played the whole time. The banks of the river were illuminated ; and constant discharges of cannon and bursts of fireworks were repeated during the descent. It was calculated that there were more than seventy thousand natives scattered about the banks of the river. They occasionally shouted in admiration of the sight ; and the other strains of the band were sometimes lost in the incessant beat of the tom-tom, the monotonous sound of which (a constant repetition of the two words that give it a name) is the most tiresome that ever annoyed the ear.

One of the principal amusements of Meerut during the cold weather is the theatre, of which I have already spoken. It is managed by some officer, who has the taste for, and who will take the trouble of, conducting its representations. I saw, on the night of my return, the performance of *Macbeth* so well done, that it was astonishing. No provincial stage in England could have managed the scenery, the music, or the general



effect better ; and for the acting—London, alas ! now-a-days, falls very often short of it. Lady Macbeth exhibited the singular novelty of being played by a gentleman, and remarkably well played too : this amateur has been long celebrated for his talents in the personification of the opposite sex : and, as I have seen him in *Mrs. Malaprop* and *Lady Macbeth*, I may be allowed to say he is the most extraordinary actor, or actress, that ever wore the sock.

The commander-in-chief, with his splendid array, on his way from Delhi into Rohilcund, I believe, passed through Meerut, and remained in it a short time : the days were all activity in consequence, and the nights all festivity. He was accompanied by Colonel Skinner and a large body of horse ; and a greater tribe was collected at Meerut than I think ever could have appeared there before, merely for the purpose of pleasure. Skinner's horse is a remarkably fine body of men ; and they added considerably to the pageantry of the scene. Their commander bears the character of a noble fellow, and has all the air of a brave man and good leader. He is

remarkably handsome, although very black ; and I regretted not being able to see more of one who does so much honour to the name we both bear. I should imagine, from his appearance, that he is two or three generations at least from his English ancestor—if, indeed, he be derived from such a source. He has several sons, and one of them is adjutant of his father's corps.

Dec. 3rd.—I left Meerut in the evening for Ghurmoktesir Ghaut—the port, it may be called, of that station on the Ganges. The distance is thirty-six miles, and I reached it at daylight in the morning, having travelled in a palanquin, by Dāk. I am not sufficiently accustomed to this mode of travelling to consider it in the least luxurious. Lolling in a palanquin may be thought in the west a mighty fine thing, but to me it is the most uncomfortable mode of moving possible. It is very true, you are able to lie down, and lounge away ; but, alas ! you cannot get up again ; and the jumping motion might put you very comfortably to sleep, if the grunting of the bearers did not keep you awake. Every two hours, or so, if you are sufficiently practised

in the conveyance to sleep, you are sure to be roused by the application for "buxees," from the bearers who are about to be relieved. The new ones, too, generally thrust a piece of paper into your face, to learn whether you are the identical person for whom they were ordered, and whose name is written upon the scroll they hold.

On entering a town, the bearers vary the usual grunt, with which they enliven the way, by extolling the character of the person they are carrying in true eastern hyperbole, not knowing even his name perhaps. The first trip I ever made by Dāk was from Meerut to Delhi. I am indeed but little practised; and just before entering the town I had fallen into a doze, from which I was awakened by the loud exclamations of my people in praise of some great man, as I imagined. They were shouting out, as we moved through the streets, "Make way for a great man;" "A mighty prince;" "The poor man's friend;" "The lion of war;" "Our father and mother;" with a hundred other honourable appellations. I expected the Great Mogul, at

least, to pass me : but not a traveller was to be seen but myself, and I was the undisputed hero of all these fine phrases. Am I Giles, or am I not? thought I, or has some facetious caliph been playing me a trick? Like Abon Hassan I am to be king for a day. On finding that I had awakened, they roared my titles out still louder; and I entered a small tent beneath a tree, by the castle ditch, in spite of this magnificent proclamation, without a soul being there to notice me, and not even a breakfast provided for the "poor man's protector."

I arrived at the Ghaut of Ghurmoktesir in the same splendid manner, the banks of the Ganges echoing my stately titles. My palace here was a very humble one indeed; at this season of the year, the water being very low, large vessels do not come even so high as Ferruckabad: I was obliged, therefore, to hire a country boat to convey myself and servants down the stream, until I should fall in with a budgerow. I had sent them forward a day or two before myself, in order that they might make my boat as comfortable as circumstances would permit; and

now that I am fairly installed in it, I cannot do better than describe it.

It is about twenty feet long, and tolerably broad in the beam, with a thatched roof reaching from the stern very nearly to the head, and supported by poles of bamboo; the sides wattled with a number of neatly contrived mats, which overlay each other, and are capable of being propped up to admit the light, or, what is of equal consequence, the air. Beneath the roof there are two apartments divided by a mat, the first of which is my kitchen, and the second, or aftermost, my hall of state. In the latter there is just room for a bed and a table; and, by way of keeping the dust and the insects from interfering with my quiet, my servants have hung it with different-coloured cloths of cotton—part, I fancy, of their summer wardrobe, which they have dedicated to the purpose. The floor is constructed of slips of bamboo, tied carelessly together, in which I not unfrequently catch my foot, to the great risk of an overthrow. On the top of the roof there is a frame of bamboo poles, from which several posts, of two or three feet

high, arise, and to which the oars are tied: these are very long pieces of bamboo, with a round flat board at the end of them.

The men stand to their oars, and it requires all their strength to move them: the noise of the rowing over-head, and the frequent bumps of the vessel upon the numerous sandbanks, render it no very easy matter to follow any pursuit. The crew consists of a manjee and six men, with a little boy, the son of the master, about six years of age, and who is not considered too young to have the management of the helm: he indeed is the only one on board sufficiently vigilant for a *Palinurus*. When any of the men take his place, they soon fall asleep, and allow the boat to drift where it will. We have a mast, which is much of a piece with the rest of the bark, crooked and rickety; while the sail is the most ragged and absurd-looking thing imaginable. The sails of these kind of boats are calculated for any purpose but holding the wind. I have frequently seen a fleet in full sail, with not a whole breadth of canvass on board any one of the vessels; the crew, squatting on the

top of them, like monkeys on the roof of a cottage, with as much complacency as if they manned the best-appointed ship in the world.

Their navigation, to a person unacquainted with the river, (which all Europeans are likely to be,) is the most incomprehensible: those, however, who are fond of interfering, are generally forced to repent it. I have always found that the best method of rigging and managing a boat, is that followed by the country you happen to be in. It is not easy, however, to convince the *Sahib Logue* of this; and many are the quarrels and accidents that occur in consequence. The natives, although indifferent enough about death when it comes, are not prone to seek it; and a person, careful about his safety, cannot do better than trust it to them.

Between Meerut and Ferruckabad the country is sufficiently uninteresting: the river is narrow and low, and the banks are generally of sand: the stream is not very rapid either, and we got on but slowly.

Dec. 8th.—In the afternoon we arrived at Ferruckabad, and pushed our way to the shore,

through a number of similar boats, a little below the town, and above the military cantonment of Futteghur. A ghaut on the Ganges always presents a considerable degree of bustle and interest. We were not exactly in high day yet; early in the morning, or sunset, being the great hours of general rendezvous. I here met my brother, who had left me soon after we descended from the hills for Shahjehanpoor, in Rohilcund, from which, being only fifty miles from the shores of the river at this point, he had ridden over to see me. As my apartment was too small to entertain a second person, we resolved upon taking possession of a room in a large house close by us, which stood apparently deserted above the river. We were fastened to a post in "the compound," as it is called, of this palace, for it really seemed to be such.

We wandered through its halls for some time, without perceiving a human being. A water vessel, to tell the hour by, which was not yet filled, was the only thing to intimate a superintendence of some description. This style of clock is common in many parts of India, and is more



simple, and fully as true, as the hour-glass. A brass basin, with a small hole at the bottom, is placed on the surface of a tub of water : it takes a fixed time, generally an hour, to fill ; and then it sinks. The guardian of this clock soon made his appearance, however, armed with a formidable sword and short baton, which latter was for announcing the time upon a gong, to the workmen of an indigo factory close at hand.

This personage was a worthy representative in figure, as well as office, of the notorious time-beaters of St. Dunstan's, to whose complexion too his was a near approach. He was dressed up to the ears in dark quilted cotton, and a dirty piece of cloth bound under his chin, as if he had been bandaged up for the mumps. This is a very common appendage to a man's face in the upper provinces; and, by swelling out his cheeks, gives him something of a ludicrously pompous expression : I always fancied it was for protection against the cold, till I learned that the bucks adopt the plan for the purpose of improving their whiskers. I do not know whether this happy discovery has reached the west yet ; but

as it may be of service to many, I think it would be wrong in me to suppress it. They have nothing to do but to oil their whiskers well ; and, brushing them in the proper direction, bandage them up, to use the phraseology of the receipt-book, as tightly as they can bear ; and if they do not look the better for it, it is not my fault at any rate. There is no personal ornament, of which the Mahometans are more proud than their beards and moustaches ; and the greater part of their life, I verily believe, is devoted to their cultivation. I have often seen them sitting, with a small looking-glass in one hand, the head turned conceitedly aside, while the other was engaged in trimming, smoothing, and curling the objects of their devotion.

We found a European inhabitant living in solitary grandeur in this magnificent mansion, which had been built by a firm of merchants in Calcutta, who failed some years ago, and whose indigo factories are now worked for the benefit of the estate. The young man, who very kindly permitted us to occupy a room in the house, made a third to our party : he was a Scotch-

man, and had the superintendence of an indigo concern near Allehghur. The Europeans, in the upper part of India, are not generally planters, but manufacturers only: they buy the plant from the natives, and encourage them to grow, by always becoming purchasers, and securing it to themselves by outbidding the native merchants. Their profits this way are not so great, perhaps, although I should imagine they must be more secure from loss. They have the superintendence of very large establishments, and should have an intimate knowledge of the native character, in order to conduct them with advantage both to their employers and their servants. I am inclined to suspect they are deficient in this quality, principally because I seldom hear an indigo planter speak well of the people under him.

At night I returned to my little nest; and, in order to be out of the way of noise, had my boat removed to the side of the sandbank in the middle of the stream; and after breakfast on the 9th again dropped downwards.

Between Ferruckabad and Cawnpore there is

little to interest in the scenery on the shores of the river, or in the towns and villages that occupy them. The women, coming down to the river-side for water; the bathing in the neighbourhood of a ghaut, with now and then a pious brahmin repeating his prayers in solitude and nakedness in the stream; or, as evening closes in, a devout Mussulman kneeling on the end of a cloth, bowing his head towards the prophet's shrine—constitute the variety of native manners. This latter is not very common; but when it does occur, it is the most striking of all the ceremonies. In a perfectly Mahometan country it is never omitted; but I do not think the faithful in India are so particular about the matter. I have seen the banks of the Nile, at sunset, scattered with the pious of the villages around, who happened to be away from the neighbourhood of their mosques at the call to prayer: while the stillness of the evening was only broken by the loud "Alla hu!" of the muezzin. I must do my own servant, however, the justice to say that he never dispenses with the needful ceremony. Soon after we halt for the evening he

retires to the shade of a tree; and, placing his carpet on the ground, kneels upon it, looking towards the east; his turban (which upon these occasions only he takes off) is placed upon the other end of the carpet; and as he bows his head, it just measures his length.

The Hindoos, at this time, are very differently engaged, preparing their dinners; they seem to be as happy as possible when this hour comes about, on the banks of the holy stream. I am very anxious to hasten down to Calcutta, and wish to remain as short a time as I can on the water; but so elaborate is the ceremony of cooking and eating, that I am forced to sacrifice several hours to it. It was with some difficulty I overcame their desire to cook in the morning as well as the evening; but at length we compromised the matter. At ten every morning I agreed to allow them to go on shore for a quarter of an hour, to eat meal and water: this they accomplish with much greater celerity than I should ever wish to do. They throw two or three handfulls of flour into a brass dish; and, sprinkling it with water, swallow it with as

much greediness as if it were the most savoury mess in the world.

The suttoo of this morning (for that is the name of the meal) has cost me a great deal of inconvenience; for my sirdar, or head servant, who always bore my keys in a bunch at his girdle, has thought proper either to sacrifice them to the river-god, by dropping them into the stream, or abandon them on the bank, to be washed off at his leisure. I must allow that he feels the annoyance much more than I do; for he has been sitting for nearly an hour in front of a trunk, peeping curiously, from time to time, into the key-hole, as if to discover some charm to open it, some "open sesame" to burst its fastening asunder. So devoted are all the servants to their particular employments, that I am sure he feels as miserable as if he had lost an only child; for my keys being hitherto his sole care, deprived of them, he knows not where to turn; I refused to have the trunks broken open, and the sorrow of the sirdar suddenly pervaded the whole party. If I had been Blue-beard himself, and the lost bunch contained the

key of the fatal closet, there could not have been greater consternation:—one man instantly proposed to return in quest of the keys; and, as the river was very winding, hoped to be able to overtake the boat. He set off in high spirits with an encouraging “*acha*” from all around, and we floated quietly down the stream.

It was beautifully calm, and by no means uncomfortably hot, even when exposed to the sun on the roof of my barge. I could not persuade my crew to row, and lazily indeed we drifted on. They threw a plank overboard; and, fastening it by both ends to the head of the boat, left it to assist our descent. The little ripple that this caused, gave me an idea that I was going faster, and I was obliged to be satisfied with the thought. The banks on each side were high, of loose sand which crumbled and fell into the stream whenever we approached them, which we generally did with a good bump; for when the current sweeps past a headland, they never attempt to fend off the vessel, but let it take its chance of going to pieces, or pushing its way through the obstacle. The

water is shallow, and the river about as broad as the Thames at London bridge, with occasionally a long ridge of sand just above the surface, well tenanted by crocodiles. These animals lie basking in the sun, and may easily be mistaken for logs of wood: on the approach of a boat, they quit their resting-place, and take to the water; but so slowly and indifferently, that they do not appear to be in the least alarmed. I have seen the natives, when towing a vessel up the stream, walk boldly through the water, to the very bank from which the animals were moving; while they sink into it to hide themselves. I never heard of a man, while thus engaged, being seized by one, although they have been known to haunt the neighbourhood of a ghaut, and draw the bathers under the stream. It is a death, however, rather to be desired by the Hindoos than avoided; so that I believe a place so selected by the crocodiles will attract by its additional sanctity rather than frighten by its danger. I know no sight so truly disgusting as a sandbank covered with crocodiles: it makes the blood run cold to look at it.



About sunset, the servant, who had gone to search for the keys, returned, and was greeted with loud yells. He had lost his labour, and returned without them, when the mysterious anxiety was cleared up. "Break open the trunks, or we shall be all starved," was the cry of my sirdar. I found he had chosen to lock up the meal belonging to himself and fellow-bearers in one of my trunks; I was forced, therefore, to comply, and restored them all to good-humour.

Dec. 11th.—At ten in the morning we arrived at the ghaut of Cawnpore, which may be called the highest port upon the Ganges of any importance; for below this the river is wider, and navigable for larger vessels than those that can be used above it. Goods of any bulk are frequently taken from the boats that bring them hither, and divided among smaller ones for the purpose of more easily ascending the stream: the banks, therefore, are full of business and bustle. I could have changed my little bark for a more splendid one if I had desired; but I found myself so snug in it, that I did not care about

"the dignity of a budgerow," which my servants urged as a reason for my making the change; (*Nam-ka-wastie*), "on account of your name;"—a feeling, that has great influence with the natives, as indeed it should with all people; I hope, however, mine is not likely to be disgraced by my continuance under the thatched roof.

Brydone, in his lively Tour of Sicily, relates the horror of his *valet de place*, lest the reputation of their whole household should be lost by his master walking across the street in Palermo. The risk I run is pretty much of the same nature. The native town of Cawnpore is nothing very extraordinary; but a number of pretty bungalows are seen from the river, the habitations of the English officers. It is a large military station, equal in extent and consequence to Meerut, and more full of dust and disagreeables than ever that place was. I was more concerned, however, in the scene around me; for, anxious to move on, I would not quit my boat, lest all should take advantage of my absence, and disperse themselves through the bazaar.

I found myself in the midst of a singular and an active people. Every description of vessel that can be imagined was collected along the bank: the pinnace, which, with its three masts and neat rigging, might have passed for a ship; bulgerows, the clumsiest of all clumsy things, with their sterns several times higher than their bows; and bauleahs, ugly enough, but lightly skimming along, like gondolas, compared with the heavy craft about them; the drifting haystacks, which the country boats appear to be when at a distance, with their naked crews straining every nerve upon their summits, and cheering themselves with a wild, and not unfrequently a sweet song; panchways, shooting swiftly down the stream with one person only on board, who sits at the head, steering with his right hand, rowing with his foot, and in the left hand holding his pipe. A ferry-boat, constantly plying across the stream, adds to the variety of the scene by its motley collection of passengers—travellers, merchants and squires, camels, bullocks and horses, all crowded together.

The vessels fastened to the shore are so closely

packed, that they appeared to be one mass, and from their thatched roofs and low entrances might easily pass for a floating village. Their inhabitants are scattered along the bank, some cooking, some smoking, and many abusing each other to the utmost of their power. When a newly-arrived vessel endeavours to take up a position among those which have already assumed their stations, the uproar is tremendous. The people of the moored boats, who perceive that a concussion is inevitable, never attempt to ward it off, but join in loud and unmeasured abuse of the crew of the intruding one, who spring to the roof of their boat, and, waving their arms in a wild manner, return it with double energy. I have watched these scenes of "wordy war," till I thought I should have dropped with laughter. As the "impending" bark draws near, the noise becomes greater and greater; till at length, hump! and all is terrible confusion. The boats below the one thus struck are moved from their position, and up rise their crews to vindicate their prior right of ground. Any of the dandees, boatmen, who may be on

the shore engaged at their meals, fly from them to unite their voices to those of their mates; indeed the passengers, who should be indifferent to the matter, cannot resist the attraction: all seem to be impelled by some magic spell to hasten to the spot, and join in the clamour: like the negro in the beautiful tale of *Vathek*, who by some uncontrollable impulse drew the inhabitants of every place through which he roved, to kick him in his course.

I have just recovered from an unexpected descent caused by such an invasion as I have described. My boat got so entangled with two or three that had been loosened from above, that we were swept bodily down the stream, and had proceeded some hundred yards before we could regain our ground. I determined to draw out of the crowd, and am now fastened to the bank a little below the cantonment. I have placed myself, however, in the midst of the washing-ground, and am entertained by the thumping of the linen upon a stone, and the pavior-like grunt from the washermen that accompanies the action. I meant to have quitted Cawnpore at twelve

o'clock; but when once, after a short absence from such an attraction, the natives can get into a bazaar, it is no easy matter to collect them together again. I shall be delayed till sunset in consequence, and the people are coming down in crowds to bathe and draw water. Under a pæpul-tree a little above the town, there is a small lingam, which has a wreath of flowers round it, and several are lying on the altar on which it is placed, I observed many men and women touch it on their passing by after bathing; and then, returning the hand to their foreheads, pour a little water upon it, and pass on.

Dec. 13th.—I am now passing the city of Sirajpoor, a very pretty one, but apparently in ruins: this is generally the appearance, I think, of a native town when viewed from any distance, on account of an irregularity in the mode of building, and an unfinished look that the houses have; one portion, perhaps, being painted, while the rest have the bricks exposed, or the plastering but partially completed. Such a want of method, however, has the effect of improving the picture; and as they generally are well

surrounded by trees, they make most interesting objects. A distant view of a native town is certainly the best: they are all pretty much alike in their interior arrangements, and few have any objects within them of great interest. I am talking only of the common towns on the banks of the Ganges, not the places of note, as Allahabad, Benares, &c.

Sailing rapidly down the river, as I am obliged to do, I find few incidents to vary the scene. At night, I am very careful to have my little bark moored in the centre of the stream to some sand-bank, of which there are a great many: for my people declare, as long, at least, as we are skirting the territory of the king of Oude, that there is great probability of being attacked by Decoits. These marauders commit their depredations in too large numbers for my party to oppose, even if they were more warlike than they are likely to prove: having the water between us and the enemy, therefore, is a prudent arrangement.

The motley passengers of the Ganges were increased this morning by a large party of my

own countrymen and women, formed by a division of the sick, and soldiers' wives belonging to a king's regiment on its march from Ghazeepore to Cawnpore. When the corps moves by land, the hospital and women are sent by water, under the command of an officer, whose service is by no means to be envied.

They were all packed into boats similar to the one I am sailing in, at the rate of fifteen or twenty to each, not including the children, who seemed to me to be without end.

There was a light breeze, and their vessels were sailing up the stream; the women were lounging upon the roofs, and the children peeping through the matting at the sides: shirts, gowns, and caps were stuck upon every part of the rigging, and fluttered away in the wind; while pots, pans, and kettles were fastened about the bamboos on the chopper (thatched) roof. There were at least fifty boats, and they were spread irregularly across the river: and many a bump I received in my passage through them, and many a curse, I am sorry to say, "both loud and deep," when the head of my boat, (which,



by-the-bye, is painted like an alligator's,) poked into the table of a breakfasting party, as my unskillful little helmsman endeavoured to thread his way through the fleet.

In the rear of this division of Amazons came the sick, who gave a still more singular variety to the party. They were in their dressing-gowns and night-caps, and perched about the different parts of their boats: they are allowed more room than the healthy; and although I think the hospital transport might be better managed than it is, they seemed tolerably comfortable. When there is no wind, the boats are towed up; and being obliged to follow each other, have not so amusing an appearance as when thus scattered over the surface. I learned that this formed the first division, and that the second was a day or two in the rear. The fleet attracted the observation of all the neighbouring villagers: the women paused on the banks, with their pitchers on their heads, to notice their white sisterhood with astonishment.

I have often wondered what these sable damsels can think of the extraordinary beings of

their own order, in European society; for they are, in every possible respect, as opposite to each other as if distinct animals; and the native women look at them as if they believe they really have nothing in common.

I soon lost sight of the Amazonian fleet, and fell into uninterrupted quiet till the end of the day. Just before sunset, I had my boat fastened to the right bank of the river, beside a little village; and, on my return from paying it a visit, I found I was not to be the sole tenant of the ground; for the second division of the women had arrived, and their boats were moored in a line above mine.

It was now just dark, and they were all landed, and running wild and half-naked among the long grass and few trees around—screaming, laughing, and capering like so many bacchanals. The boatmen were cooking their dinners in front of their vessels, under great apprehension of pollution from the uncontrolled pranks of these furies, who threatened to overturn their messes at every step. I am not surprised at the pleasure these women feel at liberation, after twelve

long hours of such confinement. They make a much greater sensation in a native village than a whole regiment of men; for the villagers fly at their approach. Such a command is a novel one, somewhat, for an officer; although I shrewdly suspect that I am miscalling it sadly when I say a command.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Allahabad—Chunar—Benares—A Suttos—A ferry—Dinapore  
and Patna—Monghyr—Baggara—Sicly Gully—Raymahal—  
the Bhagirathi—Conclusion.

Dec. 14th.—At daylight in the morning my neighbours and myself got under weigh; and by two o'clock I arrived at Allahabad, and moored on a bank close to the point of the fort where the Jumna and Ganges join: an annual fair happened to be held in the very spot, and I found a large party of both sexes assembled to celebrate it. It was a religious fair, and took place on the very spot of the confluence of the two rivers. There did not seem to me to be any thing sold: bathing and praying were the great occupations. A great number of platforms, about eight or ten feet square, with long legs to

them, stood in the water: they had canopies above them, and were as booths in English fairs: for in them people frequently sat, as if to rest themselves after having waded through the river to reach them. The brahmins, however, seemed to be the peculiar masters of each, for they never moved from their seats; but, occupying the centre with their rosaries in their hands remained at their posts, to administer to the spiritual wants of those who visited them.

It was a very pretty scene: the women had their holiday clothes on, and shone in rosy scarfs among the crowd. Some of the shorter ones were frequently up to their shoulders in wading through the stream; and I observed that they all felt great pleasure on reaching the line that marked the meeting of the waters, which is now very clearly defined—the Jumna being a bright blue, and the Ganges having still its sandy colour. From a little distance the concourse had a curious appearance. The seats, which the brahmins occupied, were on the surface of the river, and they seemed to be floating upon it, in the positions in which those suspected of being

witches in the good old times, were forced to assume to undergo the test of their virtue.

The fort has a very fine appearance from my position: there is now a long tract of sand between it and me, however, which, when the river is at its height, is under water. This is the season it is at its lowest. My Hindoo servants joined in the operations that were going on, and I rather think related some of their travels to places of even superior sanctity to Allahabad; for they seemed to excite a great degree of interest in their hearers, in some of which I shared, if I may judge by the looks that were every now and then directed towards me. There is an invisible cause of the greater holiness of Allahabad, over other places where rivers join; for a subterranean one is supposed to unite in this spot with the Ganges and Jumna.

I descended a species of cave within the fort by a flight of steps to a dark narrow passage, at the end of which there is the trunk of a tree still alive, although the air is quite excluded, and the rock which finishes the cave is moist with water, which the people believe arises from

the course of the Seeraswattee, the mysterious river. Be that as it may, the belief is not a whit more foolish than that held by the Maltese, who deem that St. Paul's Cave, in their island, never diminishes, though thousands every day carry off its chalk.

Dec. 15th.—For some time after quitting Allahabad, I thought I could distinctly trace the courses of the two rivers, and I was pleased to witness their junction, after having toiled so much to pass the mighty barrier that divides their sources: to have seen the first and last habitations, too, watered by the Jumna, was a great satisfaction. What is Cursali by the side of the king of worshipped places; and poor little Dorali to the sacred city I am now approaching? We soon, however, floated past the blue stream of the Jumna, and went merrily on between high banks of very little interest, until, about sunset, we reached Mirzapor. It is a very large place, and stretches along the bank of the river for some distance: its ghaut was full of people, and its port crowded with vessels. In the town were all the varieties of mosques,

temples, and houses; and, as my boatmen assured me, very capital bazaars.

I knew the consequence of permitting my people to land; and preferred passing its attractions, and remaining a few hours near some small village. It is evident, from the greater number of boats on the river, that we are fast reaching a country of more consequence and greater population. We pass every hour a number of fishing-boats, and are well supplied with descriptions of their contents: I do not, however, like more than two or three kinds of the fish of the Ganges. The quantity that swarms in its waters is beyond all belief; they would be nearly as difficult to enumerate as the fish of the sea; and the lives of those who follow the trade of fishermen are neither laborious nor unprofitable. They seem to be quite satisfied if they catch two or three tolerably large fish, which may bring them something even under a rupee, for the *matériel* of the service is very simple and cheap.

A large town, like Mirzapoor, springs up so suddenly on the banks of the river, without any



long suburb to announce its vicinity, that you would be struck by its size, even were it much less than it really is. When it possesses so large a population, however, as nearly 300,000, how great must the contrast be to the little villages above and below it!

When it was nearly dark I stopped, to enable my people to cook and dine, determined to reach Benares to-morrow. There is a small village not very far from us; and close to the banks of the stream lies a charpoy, or native bedstead, which has lately, no doubt, been the hier of some Hindoo, whose body has, by this time, regaled the vulture and the crow in its progress down the holy river. Such memorials of mortality are not unfrequent: the cots, on which the bodies are placed, are put sufficiently near the water to allow them to be washed off; and, floating along the surface, they are often seen in a voyage up the river, with birds of prey seated upon them.

Dec. 16th.—We had a most beautiful night, as calm as possible; and I was kept awake (that I might observe it) by the voices of my rowers,

who murmured a very sweet air, for I cannot call it singing, to keep their oars in time. A most discordant yell rose from the banks, which drowned, now and then, the softer accents of my boatmen: it was caused by the united tones of the jackals and the watchmen; the latter sat among their cucumbers and sugar-canes. I know not which screamed the loudest. I could not gather the meaning of the song the crew of my boat chanted, but the words sounded softly enough. The moaning of their voices seemed to me to be like what is understood in Scotland by a "sugh," and might very well have passed for a hush-a-by, when the nurse had nearly succeeded in murmuring herself to sleep, as well as her infant. I think the words of the Hindoo melodies are scarcely worth recording; such I mean as are sung by the working classes. They celebrate eating and sensuality generally so much, that they might seem to disprove the Indian's claim to great abstinence, which, from their devotions to their meals, I have already questioned.

As

"The second day  
passed rapidly on the busy mountain-top."

we came within view of the fort of Chunar; and, by the time we were abreast of it, the haze had cleared away from the Ghoruckpoor hills, an uneven range, and the first elevations we had yet seen in the whole length of the river from Meerut. The fort stands upon the top of a high rock hanging over the river, with towers and walls down its sides to the water. It is conspicuous from the rocks around by its dark-grey stone; and, as we passed it before sunrise, appeared to frown gloomily upon us from its inaccessible height. A scapoy centry, pacing up and down one of its platforms, was all the indication of life it displayed. It reminded me much of the castle of Dumbarton, although it had more works to the water side, and there was nothing in the scenery around to destroy the fancy.

A turn in the river made the fort appear in the middle of the stream, and it seemed well calculated to guard the pass. It was altoge-

ther a beautiful scene; and rising as it does above such wide and unvarying plains, like a green spot in the desert, I was loth to quit it. In our progress towards Benares, we kept close to the east bank of the river; and when distant from it two or three hours, had an amusing variety of travellers towards the sacred city to enliven the route. The road on the shore appeared so crowded, that I imagined some fair was to be held; but I learned that that was not the case, and the concourse was by no means unusual. There were even whole families: there was a father carrying two baskets balanced across his shoulder on a pole; his cooking-pots and meal in one, while in the other, "nestled curious, there an infant lay." The little thing sat as comfortably as possible, covered up to its chin in clothes, and turning its black head about in the most independent manner. If I had not seen this sort of travelling-cradle before, I should have taken its inmate for one of a litter of puppies, with its muzzle poked out of its bed. The mother followed with a bundle on her head, and

a child upon her hip; while two or three other little things trotted away by her side.

I was much struck with the business-like manner in which all parties were pursuing their journey: there was no lounging nor pausing on the road: men, women, and children pushed on as fast as they could. There were crowds of beggars, however, who were very glad to stay their course for the chance of a few pice, and their whining exclamations were incessant. "Something to eat," was the universal cry, which was always accompanied, by the women most particularly, by an expressive display of their emptiness, the gathering up of their wrinkled skins in their hands, to prove how much room there was within for more nourishment.

Some grave-looking brahmins, well covered with clothes, were moving soberly along upon little tattoos: while others sat more at their ease beneath the conical-shaped canopies of their carriages, almost lost in the midst of their goods and their clothes. The bullocks that

draw them are generally handsome animals, very fat and very sleek: some of them have the honour of bearing the charms of the other sex, as we may gather from the occasional glances that their bright black eyes shoot forth from between the folds of the curtains that seem envious to conceal them.

Among other adventurers to the city, was a snake-charmer, who took advantage of a pause in my passage to sit down on the bank, and pipe to his pupils, which reared their crests, and appeared to take real delight in the music. He had two which he took from a boy, and handled with the most perfect indifference. They seemed to be equally careless about his touch, and wound round his arms and his neck as familiarly as possible.

The approach to a fair or a horse-race in our own country, cannot afford more variety or interest than an every-day assemblage in the neighbourhood of Benares, if these be the common objects, which I am assured they are. I saw also some of the pilgrims, with whose errand I became so well acquainted at Gungoutri, carry-

ing vessels of water into the city: they were slung over their shoulders in little baskets; and among the crowd, was one man with his arm fixed above his head and his fist clenched, the nails of his fingers hanging in strings down the back of his hand.

I am not going to give a description of the city of Benares; for that has been so frequently and so well done, that it would be unnecessary, even if I had passed sufficient time at it to enable me to do so. So large a town (for its population is nearly six hundred thousand) must form a grand object from the river; and where all, or the greater part of its inhabitants are engaged in the cleanly rite of bathing in the sacred stream, the scene is beyond all belief beautiful. Soon after daylight, the daily ceremony begins; and until the sun grows warm, the crowds at the river, with the parties drawing towards it, or returning from it, throw the whole place into animation. While I was floating before the ghats in admiration of the scene, it seemed to me like some fairy dream—so unlike was it to any thing I had ever wit-

nessed. In Hurdwar it is a more hasty ceremony, and I think a purely religious rite; but here the devout, the indifferent, and the profane are so mingled together, engaged in their different occupations of praying, washing, and playing, that it is hard to say which party predominates.

The women seem to be in fully as great number as the men, and have not a separate ghaut from them: they always, however, stand lower in the stream, and the deference that is paid to their situation by the men is very great. Both sexes stand up to their waists in the water, and occasionally dip their heads beneath it; but I never observed any one swim out. There are many who do not like the dipping part of the affair, any more than the fair bathers on our own coast: they always carry with them a brass vessel, which they fill constantly, and pour over their heads. I have seen them repeat this operation twenty times at least without pausing.

I could observe brahmins performing their



prayers, and others making offerings, while their neighbours were washing their clothes and splashing away at a rate quite enough to shake the gravity of any but a brahmin. It was amusing to see a fat old priest waddle from the stream like a turtle, and take up his position on the steps of the ghaut; while, not far from him, the light forms of the women rose from the wave, and stood with their transparent drapery floating about them, to comb their long locks—like mermaids in all but their want of mirrors. When their hair is nearly dry, they hold their clean robes like a screen round their figures; and shaking the wet ones off them, draw the others close, and are dressed in a moment. The figures approaching the ghaut, some of them in blue and rose-coloured scarfs, as well as white, with their pitchers on their heads and their children by their sides, give a still more picturesque effect to the scene. The number of boats that are passing up and down the river, the splashing of the oars, and the song of the rowers, with the screams of the children, who, without their consent to the cere-

mony, are getting well ducked, complete the picture; and such a picture can certainly be exhibited no where but on the banks of the Ganges, and in no part of those populous shores so well as at the ghauts of Benares. The sun was not so high, but that the domes and minarets of the Holy City were reflected in the stream below; and it appeared that the town, as well as its sons and daughters, had fled to the bosom of the sacred river.

I was not able to linger long before so lively an assemblage, and floated away towards Ghazepore. The banks on each side of the river improve very much in their soil and cultivation, and towns come really quickly upon us. At a short distance, in a direct line, but a long way off from the windings of the river, I saw a thick column of smoke rise to the sky: I looked at it from the roof of my boat through a glass, and could plainly perceive a large crowd of people assembled round the pile, which I was convinced it was. My boatmen said they had no doubt it was a suttee, for they were frequent in the neighbourhood of Ghazepore. I de-

sired them to push on, in hopes that I might be in time to witness the conclusion of the ceremony; for, alas! from the thickness of the smoke, the sacrifice had begun. It happened unfortunately, as it generally does, "the more hurry the less speed;" for we ran upon more sand-banks than we had ever done before: and although I did not draw any dire omen from the mounting blaze of the funeral pile, it seemed very likely to drive me from my course, or shipwreck my bark; and it was dark before I reached the point.

The crowd had dispersed, and some stragglers on the shore confirmed our belief that it was a suttee. The woman, they said, was very young, and had just been married: she had no children, and was burnt by her own desire. I felt sorry I had not reached the spot in time, from a better motive, I hope, than mere curiosity. When the most eloquent persuasion fails, however, (the silent appeal of a babe to its mother,) it is not likely that an accidental visiter could have any influence: yet I think the opportunity of expressing horror at such rites should never be

lost by a European ; for although no good may immediately spring from it, it must tend much to the discouragement of it.\*

If a writer were in search of pathetic subjects for his pen, he could not do better than seek for them among the annals of devoted widows in India. I remember reading in a number of the *Missionary Register* of some years ago, a very sad tale of a young bride, whose betrothed husband was seized by the cholera morbus on the very day the nuptials were to have been completed. The relations of both parties had assembled in the town where the ceremony was to take place ; and many had come from a great distance. As the lovers were of rich and high caste families, grand preparations were made to do honour to the occasion. Instead of the joy and merriment that all were anxiously awaiting, death of the most dreadful nature called for their assistance. In a few hours after his attack, the husband died ; and his young widow, (for so she resolved to consider herself,) although but his

\* When this passage was written, the Government had not issued their prohibition of the crime.

affianced bride, declared her intention of being burnt upon his funeral pile. At first some doubt arose as to the legality of the sacrifice, the marriage not having been completely solemnised. The laws of Menu, alas! do not give the benefit of a doubt. The result of the deliberation between her relations and the brahmins was, that she was every way his wife; and the shaster, considering the bride fully bound to the husband by the vow she had plighted to him, permitted a voluntary immolation. Funerals must be sudden in this country: so the same noon that was to have seen her happiness, now witnessed her destruction; the same crowd surrounded the pile, that was to have hailed with shouts of gratulation the bridal procession. It was still a holiday to them, however; for music accompanies the ceremony, and shouts of mirth rend the air. "I am persuaded that the English breast has not a more joyous sensation on beholding the launch of a ship, than these inhuman beings experienced at the launch of an immortal spirit into an awful eternity!"—So says a writer in the

same pages from which I have gathered the story, in his description of a similar act.

The widow, whose expiring flame I had witnessed, was very young, and had but just married: her husband might have died equally unexpectedly with the unfortunate hero of the foregoing tale. It was no wonder that her fate should have occupied my thoughts during the rest of the night; and I may be excused for dwelling a little longer upon the subject. They had no business, I confess, to assume the shape they have done; but as I passed Ghazcepoore and its fields of roses by night, I was not able to dwell upon their beauties: although at this season of the year the garden of Gul was rich in bloom, I had no other employment for my pen.

## THE SUTTEE.

The evening sun-beams threw their golden light,  
And smiling usher'd in the bridal night;  
The gay procession wound its happy way  
In colours brilliant as the jocund day.  
The pipe, the viol, and unceasing drum,  
Proclaim to all, the blooming bride is come!

Light dancing maids the gaudy train prolong,  
And Gunga's banks are startled too with song.  
Thousands rush forth the joyous scene to hail,  
And lend their voices lest the music fail,  
The bride reclined, in costly jewels dress'd—  
Jewels less bright than hope within her breast,  
Of sweetly-scented flowers a snowy braid,  
Pure as the fancies of the espoused maid,  
In her black hair a striking contrast lay,  
While o'er her neck the sable ringlets play.  
The bride reclined, a crimson litter bore  
Her blushing charms along the sacred shore.  
What joy is breaking from her large dark eye,  
The vivid lightnings of a tropic sky !  
The rosy veil is scoldly drawn aside  
To show the glances she affects to hide.  
'Tis all a modest maiden dare betray—  
The sudden sparkle of a meteor's play.  
No hand may give those features to the light,  
Save his who takes her to his hall to-night.

Hark, from that hall what happy spirits break !  
What joyous revelry the echoes wake !  
Lo, the young lord awaits her at the porch,  
While mid-day bursts from each attending torch.  
The maid has reach'd her bridegroom's home at last :  
The morning came, and all her joy had pass'd ;  
Death had gone over like a wild samoom,  
And mark'd her youthful husband for the tomb.

And must he only suffer ! Still the pride  
Of youth and beauty lives, the lovely bride.  
She too must die : some savage god, unknown  
To Christian climes, demands her for his own.

The pile now rears aloft its awful head,  
Where late the bride her gay procession led :  
Still ring the notes of merriment : the strain  
Of mirth still swoops along the crowded plain.  
Why rush the thousands ? Why this grand display  
Of pomp and pride ? A widow burns to-day !  
Must the same mirth, the same bright hues appear,  
To grace the bridal, and to deck the bier ?  
Is there no sorrow in the hurrying throng ?  
Will the wild herd still pour the maddening song ?  
No breast to sympathise, no tear to fall,  
No trembling hand to elevate the pall ?  
It is some jubilee, —it cannot be,  
That death is hail'd with such a savage glee.  
Another bridal ! see the gathering fire,  
The altar stands upon that burning pyre !  
There, in still death, the bridegroom waits his spouse,  
To bind their union, and renew her vows,  
Calmly she stands, and gazes o'er the scene,  
Unnerved by thoughts of what she might have been.  
How changed that day, on which, almost from birth,  
Arose the star of all her hopes on earth !  
For, pledged in childhood, all her charms had grown  
(So fondly thought she) for that day alone ;



To bless his sight, whose name was wont to share  
 In every wish and every childish prayer,  
 Since first she lisp'd the mighty Brahmah's name !  
 Yet now unawed she views the spreading flame ;  
 With false devotion gazes on the pile,  
 And moves to die—with a contented smile ,  
 Waves a farewell , and, steadfast to the last,  
 Scorns on this world one lingering look to cast.

Yes ! she rejects this world without one thought  
 Of all the bliss but yesterday had brought ,  
 Sees unconcern'd an aged father stand,  
 And scarcely owns the pressure of his hand ,  
 Hears a loved brother urge her on to die  
 With cold indifference : not a rebel sigh  
 Bursts to declare that yet one pulse remains,  
 Against her will to throb at human pains.  
 Beyond this transient earth her heart is set ,  
 She dreams that happiness may meet her yet ,  
 Thinks, like a phoenix, 'tis her fate to rise  
 Pure from her ashes, to adorn the skies ;  
 And bear (for all her torments seek but this)  
 Her husband with her to divide her bliss.  
 For this she suffers, and for this she dies ,  
 Disowns, for this, all nature's dearest ties.

O noble spirit ! In a Christian's cause,  
 A martyr's crown, and a whole world's applause,  
 To buoy the hopes, and mitigate the pain,  
 Have oft display'd their tempting lures in vain !

Heroes have sprung before the torture's wheel,  
And ev'n in martyrdom have stoop'd to feel.  
Yet here, each day, in agonising fires,  
For sinful man some gentle dame expires,  
Gentle and pure, with every tender fear  
A woman knows, yet all forgotten here.

A cheerful victim, lo, she mounts the pile,  
While the flame quickens in the fragrant oil :  
The thickening smoke now circles o'er her head,  
Her husband's bosom forms an easy bed.  
Here she reclines, nor seeks a safer rest ;  
No couch so sweet as his unconscious breast.  
While the fire wreathes around each quiv'ring limb,  
She feels it not, she slumbers upon him ;—  
A fleeting rest : with him she wakes, to reach  
Eternal joy, for thus the Vedas teach.  
Too fatal error ' oh ! that such a mind  
To truth divine should still continue blind '  
She will not doubt : devoted to her creed,  
She claims the glory, and demands the meed ;  
Courts the proud triumph of a Hindoo bride,  
Retroth'd in life, in death to be allied.

About two o'clock in the afternoon I passed  
the fort of Buxar, which looks very prettily  
from the river, which is here of a good breadth.  
Several European bungalows rise from the

banks, and give a lively and English appearance to the scene. This is one of the stations of the Company's stud, and their stables are on both sides of the river: the high road from Calcutta to Benares passes through this station, and by a ferry crosses to the opposite side. The shores present therefore an animated picture: groups, collected on each side, awaiting the passage-boats, and the crowded and various travellers in them, afford plenty of amusement, to which the little uproar that generally ensues upon gathering the fare adds considerably.

It is difficult to conceive a more bustling affair than the passage of the Ganges by a large body, composed, as it ever must be, of such different materials. In October, 1826, I crossed over it at this place, when marching with my regiment from Dinapore to Meerut. We arrived at the point of embarkation about sunrise, and found a great number of boats awaiting us. They were of all sizes and of several shapes. Some had decks to them of bamboo rafters, with earth laid over them; others had choppers or roofs; and many were without decks of any description.

Into these latter the soldiers were crowded, while the others were filled by horses, ponies, carriages, gigs, tents, camels, bullocks, palanquins, hackeries, drivers, and servants of all denominations, with every species of trunk and package that can be imagined.

The tumult in getting the fleet afloat was tremendous: many horses refused to enter the boats; and bullocks, frightened at the noise, threw off their loads, and scampered along the banks—their owners running and screaming after them with all their might—the camels groaning in the painful manner they always do when any thing uncommon in their course occurs—the stubborn elephants declining to go into the water—their mahouts abusing them, and digging their iron instruments into their heads—the quarrelling of the boatmen,—the screaming of the servants to protect their master's property—formed but a slight catalogue of the confusion that prevailed on commencing our passage across the river. The pencil of the caricaturist would have been incessantly employed in catching the absurdities of the scene. “The

march to Finchley," (although I hope, as far as the Europeans were concerned, we were military enough,) did not present half of the ludicrous scenes that our ferry did.

The common way of embarking obstinate horses was very amusing. The saccs sat in the boat, and pulled with all his strength at the halter: the unwilling animal naturally backed, and a second groom clasped the first about the waist to prevent his being pulled over; and, according to the power required, other men clapped themselves on. Two stood behind the poor horse, holding a long pole at his hams, to prevent his retreating too far; and frequently co-operated with the pulling party in front, by pushing in concert. Thus goaded, the animal was soon driven to make a leap into the boat. The moment this was done, the horses already in possession began to kick at the new arrival: the frightened grooms let go; then commenced a general fight: the men rushed out, and left the field to the chargers, some of which jumped into the water, and, swimming ashore, galloped off with half the camp-followers shouting at their heels.

The scene of the passage, when all the boats were fairly afloat, was extremely beautiful: there were, at least, a hundred, if not more, crossing in two or three divisions; and as the river was broad, and the stream very irregular in its course, they appeared to be rowing in several opposite directions. Now that the shouting of the people was at an end, we had the songs of the rowers, and the sounds of our own bugles; and very seldom, I fancy, does the Ganges present so animated and entertaining a spectacle. It took nearly the whole day to effect the passage of "the general camp, pioneers and all."

At night-fall this day, we arrived at the mouth of the Soane, and stopped at the ghaut near to the point of that river's junction with the Ganges. I think some antiquarians have been inclined to believe that this meeting took place at one period lower down, close to Patna: which town has, among others, been selected for the honour of representing the ancient Pali-bothra, founded upon the probability I have mentioned, that the Soane and the Ganges once united in that neighbourhood. This river is,

tolerably broad, and of a more blueish tint than the one into which it flows.

The Ganges now grows wider every day, as we proceed, and the stream has become more rapid. Before noon, we were anchored at the ghaut of Dinapore, where there was the usual crowd and bustle. The cantonments are very good; they form two quadrangles. The west side of the larger one contains the barracks of the British regiment, a long line of buildings tolerably cool and comfortable; the others are the houses of the officers. Those at the northern extremity have gardens to them, but the rest are generally close and confined. All around is very flat; and the area which the station occupies stands but a few feet above the river, which, during the rainy season, is a perfect sea; so broad, that the opposite shore appears but a faint line on the horizon.

I think the Ganges is seen in its greatest glory here. The white peaks of the mountains of Nepaul, which are directly eastward of this spot, are frequently very plainly seen during the hottest weather. We have the advantage,

therefore, of a refreshing prospect in the most trying portion of the year :—but

“ Who can hold a fire in his hand  
By thinking on the frosty Caucasus ? ”

The hardest life that any person can lead is a life of idleness. There is so much difficulty in overcoming this hardship in such a cantonment as Dinapore, during the summer months, that it is not surprising many fall victims to it. Having nothing to do, has always been a reproach against officers of the army in quarters : and it is most deplorably true in this place. At the season of the year I allude to the troops are never employed, and the men are forbidden to be out of their barracks between the hours of seven in the morning and five in the afternoon ; the officers, therefore, have nothing to engage their attention, beyond what an hour or two will be ample for, during each day. From sunrise to sunset what a weary time many have to toil through ; and, when the close of the day enables them to turn out, how little is there to relieve the dulness of their situations !



The country round is flat, sandy, and uninteresting; the society very small; and the extent of the evening exercise is, perhaps, a ride or drive round and round the quadrangles I have mentioned; the view being bounded by the low white-washed buildings on each side. The civil station at Bankipore, nearly nine miles off, is too far to take all the advantage of, that its agreeable residents and pretty situation invite them to: they are of necessity confined very much to the squirrel-like revolutions of their own cage, which, I think, few would pass a year in without sighing for liberty.

When I was last in Dinapore, there was no church, and the service was performed in a room fitted up for the purpose: one has now been commenced, however, and is already some feet above the ground. It will add much to the beauty as well as benefit of the station. It is a singular thing, that the last buildings thought of in the military posts of the British, as well as in the civil stations, are the churches: yet no part of the world requires good places of worship more than this. Many persons, I am

convinced, are deterred from frequenting public service from the impossibility of bearing the heat of the rooms they would be obliged to sit in, from their general unfitness, and the restlessness and close contact of all classes that attend.

About eight miles from this, on the road to Benares, is a very pretty mosque standing above a tank, at a place called Monceea. It is going fast to destruction ; but it has some of the prettiest carving about it that I have seen in India ; plantain-leaves, and flowers, cut in stone most admirably. Several buildings surround the water, and the mosque is well sheltered by trees. It is, indeed, the most quiet and romantic spot I have ever been in.

I did not remain very long at Dinapore ; but standing again to sea (for although at this season the river is not more than two-thirds of its greatest breadth, it deserves that name,) I soon reached Patna. It was not prudent to approach it closely, from the difficulty of quitting it again, without being lodged on some of its sandbanks ; and I found a great number of boats

moored to a dry ridge abreast of the town, to which I caused my bark to be fastened also. I was in hopes, being some little distance from the bazars, that I might have kept my people all together, and been able to quit it again during the night. I soon discovered, however, that the manjee, and most of his crew, were natives of Patna; and they came to me with their hands clasped, and fawning, as if some terrible calamity had happened to them, to ask leave to visit their friends. They promised faithfully, if I granted it, to return before it was dark. It was impossible to deny what so many whimsical contortions were used to obtain: the smiles, grimaces, and twistings of native petitioners are very singular, and prove how much they have always been taught to consider themselves slaves.

I suspected I was to be deceived, however; and hour after hour passed away without the return of my boatmen. My servants had gone, one after the other, in pursuit of them; and I was left half the night in solitary possession of my boat. I should have been glad to have

gone too, but was literally obliged to be my own sentinel, and could not abandon my post. I had several convivial parties in my neighbourhood: the tom-tom, and the screaming of the singers, made the Ganges echo. A party seemed to be giving a feast to some of the same caste, and positively all ceremony was banished from the board. The dinner was over, and the evening's entertainment consisted of the most awful drumming and singing I ever heard. I found myself, although an unbidden, a much-honoured guest; for their exertions were redoubled on perceiving my vicinity. It was a happy meeting, and cost but very little to the donor—a rupee or two: there seemed to be no inclination to intoxicating liquors or herbs; and with the exception of the concert, they were extremely orderly.

There is no light or liveliness in a native city at night. Large as Patna is, there is scarcely a lamp to be seen, or a sound to be heard, but what proceeds from the immediate banks of the river, and the lungs of my own neighbours.

The houses all face inwards; and the people prefer sitting in clusters, gossiping, in the front of their shops, to enjoying the purer air of the river. It very seldom happens that a native has the lounging part of his house towards the water; and, provided it be near enough to visit occasionally, it is all he appears to care about.

At daylight, my crew had not returned, and I felt some apprehension of being deserted. At length, about seven, a long and trembling train appeared. I thought it necessary to call to them with some degree of anger; but could not continue it long, for the still more ludicrous grimaces that were made to propitiate me. The manjee stood at some distance, and writhed about in the most absurd style; while, to heighten the picture, three or four women, the wives of some of the party, with their children in their hands, joined him in a more subdued manner. He who was the principal bugleman of the crew, pointed first to himself, next to his family, and then towards me, as if dedicating

them all to my service ; when, clasping his hands, he seemed to say, “ I now leave our fate with you.”

I thought it proper to scold ; but every fresh word of anger only seemed to renew the gestures : I simply ordered them, therefore, to get into the boat, and make all haste for departure : this called forth fresh action on all sides. ‘ There is something, surely,’ I thought, ‘ in all this, more than their sorrow for what is past !’ and I sent for my sirdar to gather it from them. They said, as they were not likely to return for some time from Calcutta, they hoped I would give them a certain sum of their wages in advance, to leave with their families. While he was interpreting this to me, the anxious looks of the boatmen and their wives were too much to resist. If, while I listened, my eye fell upon them, their eccentric appeal recommenced. When I consented to their request, they were perfectly delighted : it did not seem, however, to create great harmony among themselves ; for a furious argument began upon the mode of

division, which I put a stop to by sending them into the boat. The women were not satisfied with what they had received, and the crew seemed averse to part with more. As they were pushing off, one of the women 'kilted' her clothes 'abunc her knee,' and, marching into the water, insisted upon one more rupee; and, after a long and stormy harangue, she succeeded in gaining her point. They then all collected on the shore, and stood gazing at us till we were out of sight. They seemed very poor and ragged, or they had not been able to do honour to the occasion by coming in their best attire.

I know not whether, at such a parting, the manly cheek of a British seaman would have been bathed by a tear; but the crew of my adventurous bark bore the calamity with much greater philosophy, albeit to them it is a long, and not unfrequently a perilous voyage. The man who gave up the additional rupee to the winning tongue of his wife, seemed to feel the matter the most, perhaps from a consciousness of the ill

grace with which he had yielded it ; for, generally, they are very ready to give all they have to their families.

The pay the boatmen receive is not much ; but it is necessary, on hiring a boat, to stipulate that the greater portion should be paid on the conclusion of the voyage ; otherwise, you might be left in a helpless plight from the desertion of your crew. I have heard many people complain of having found themselves in this dilemma, and I can conceive none more disagreeable. There are not many situations on the banks of the Ganges where one would like to be delayed for more than a day ; and, when a boat is abandoned in this manner at any great distance from a town, it will take some time to gather together a sufficient number of dandees to get it off again.

The river has now become a complete thoroughfare ; and scarcely a moment passes that we do not pass vessels of every description. The water is deep enough to admit pinnaces ; and “ they drag their slow length along ” without much difficulty. They generally have eighteen or twenty



men to tow them, who seem to be much strained (as they creep along the bank) by the effort. One long line is attached to the mast, to which each dandee fastens a piece of bamboo by a short string, at intervals of five or six feet apart, and resting it on his shoulder, pulls with all his strength. If a breeze spring up, and render it unnecessary to tow, they immediately cast off their lines, and, jumping into the water, like otters, swim on board their vessel. At times, fifty or even a hundred boats may be seen, following each other in a string up the stream: while their numerous dandees are filing along the bank: ten miles a day, however, (the rate at which they usually go,) is weary travelling.

In the afternoon, we reached Monghir. On the ghaut of this place there is generally a considerable degree of bustle, from the number of heggars, travellers, bird-fanciers, barbers, and blacksmiths, that assail you with their several commodities and importunities. The town is famous for its manufacture of guns and pistols, and every sort of smith's work; and it is hard to pass an hour near it without being talked into

the purchase of some of them. The guns are extremely cheap, but I cannot say much for their utility. Out of six that I once saw tried, four burst. They may do very well to frighten the thieves with; but I would rather be shot at by one, than shoot with it. The small tools of iron and steel, which they present to you, although neat enough to the eye, are very little better in reality. They are the most persevering dealers under the sun, and seem disposed to accommodate their prices to the most zealous chapman. Some men brought monkeys down to the ghaut for sale, and several had cages of wire, with birds ready to put into them, if we were inclined for the purchase.

Not very far from the ghaut is the gate of the fort, within which are most of the bungalows of Europeans, and through which you must pass to the native town, a remarkably good one. Besides the quantity of hardware made and sold by the natives, there are "Europe shops," containing many good and necessary articles, and kept by native merchants. The principal street is so much broader than usual, that you might fancy



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at the ghaut of Monghir, and until nearly dark was plagued by the importunities of the blacksmiths and the beggars, who were in great numbers. There are no more wretched objects than these latter, who collect on the banks of the Ganges to gather alms from the travellers: they are sometimes seen in the neighbourhood of a ferry, in crowds of thirty or forty, men, women, and children, naked and miserable; and while your boat is drifting slowly down, or being dragged up the stream, they follow it with their whining lamentations along the bank. They seem generally to choose spots where there is likely to be some impediment offered to your course, as their fraternity in England select the foot of a hill, for the purpose of continuing longer with you. The men are often mutilated in a disagreeable manner from accident or disease: sometimes they are without toes, and have their hands cut off. The women are more healthy in appearance, and are remarkably well made: a tattered coat about their loins to serve for a petticoat is all they wear: their long limbs carry them nimbly and unfettered after you, for

the part of a little soul, which last they are anxious to clean; and if they take up their ground in a judicious position, their lives are very far from being of want. A flimsy shed, or tent of such a nature to protect them from the weather, and such means they have as little common, as the rascals through the woody parts of our country, to whom they bear as strong a affinity in their habits of begging and living, as the gnomes of the and the rest of the world do to the stars. They have always a number of small stones to put in their cries: for, like the insects to which I have compared them, they are ever care to increase and multiply to the utmost. When the beaumen or servants are about work they stand at a little distance, holding a basket, which is generally collected from the and placed apart for them to remove without touching the doors by a close contact. The Hindoos are very charitable, and it seldom happens that the poor go hungry away from the door.

## CHAPTER IX.

Village of Colgang—Comfortless habitations—Musliman tomb—Story of a tiger—Rajmahal—Ruined Palace—Tomb of Mr. Cleveland—The Rajmahal hills—Entrance into the Bhagirutty—Sacred branch of the Ganges—Hindoo toilette—Customs of the Hindoos—Villages of Bengal—Scriptural illustrations—Tamarind trees—Bats—White ants—Singular vow—Insects, vermin, &c.—Architecture in the East—Bazaar at Burhampore—Invalid soldiers—Return to Calcutta—Attachment of native servants—Proof of sincerity.

At daylight we left Monghir, and soon entered an ocean; so wide is the river even at this season of the year. It was necessary to keep in the middle of the stream, and I saw but little of the banks. There is nothing of great interest, except the station of Boglipoor, which, as it stands very low, we could not see, and the hot spring of Sectacxon, between it and Monghir, until within

sight of the Rajmahal hills, when the whole face of the country is changed. Independently of the beauty of the scenery at this point, it is evident that we are entering a more southern climate: the trees, &c. of the tropics increase in number, and the people are already blacker and more effeminate in their appearance. The change to the province of Bengal, after a long residence in the upper part of India, is very striking.

I came-to, for a short time, at the village of Colgong, which is beautifully situated on a point of land forming the boundary of a deep bay made between it and Pattergotta by the river. The sides of the bay are thickly wooded, and a very dark forest bounds it; while the hills of Rajmahal rise prettily above. Nearly opposite Colgong is a cluster of high rocks ascending in the centre of the stream, with trees growing among them: it is a fine object; and nothing can be more picturesque than the oddly-shaped boats, with their ragged sails, issuing from the shadowy pass it seems to be the gate of. The high road from Calcutta lies through this village; and not very far above it, stands a rest-house or bungalow imme-

diately over the river, and in the midst of a tope of trees : it has a verandah round it, from which there is a lovely prospect.

There is no part of the Ganges where the lovers of the picturesque could better place a house ; but it is seldom destined to be occupied, but by people in a very great hurry to get away from it. These houses are very numerous on the road as far as Benares, and are amply provided with rooms, but totally destitute of every thing that can make them habitable. An old woman presides over them, and very prudently keeps her guard without the walls ; for more tumble-down edifices never were erected. In a stormy night, all the adventures of an old romance may be realized by even a moderately imaginative traveller : creaking of boards, banging of doors, the whistling of the wind, the flitting of bats, and other proper accompaniments to the freaks of a ghost, with the additional one of the screaming jackals,—are enough to give the air of a haunted castle to any of these rude habitations. A worse intruder than even a ghost may occasionally summon you to rise ; for both a tiger



and a snake have been known to carry their researches to the very centre of these buildings.

It was only for the morning mess of meal and water that I stopped at Colgong; but I was not displeased to pass a much longer time at it than necessary for that purpose, to enjoy the beauties of the scene. Unfortunately, I may say here, the stream carries my little vessel so quickly down, I am no sooner within sight of a beauty but it is gone; and the fuss and confusion to get the boat to shore and off again, render it impossible to approach it nearer than the point from which I first discern it.

I passed the pretty village of Sicly Gully without being able to stop to pay a visit to the Musculman tomb on the summit of a rocky hill behind it, and which is well worth seeing. I climbed up to it on my way up the river in the month of April, when the face of the country was neither so lively nor so rich, and should have been glad to have seen it at a more gay season. The jungle is thick about it; and on that occasion I met some of our party running

down the hill, at a great rate, as I was going up it, who declared that they had been interrupted in their examination of it by a tiger, who seemed to be familiar enough with the spot. Whether their fears magnified a jackal into one or not, I do not know; but when, after a little deliberation upon the prudence of continuing my ascent, I reached the height, he was gone. It is singular enough, that the same story is believed here regarding a periodical visit to this tomb from a tiger, as one or two that I have already noticed in similar places. Thursday, the day at Bowance Mut, is also the day here: so these animals are governed by an understanding that they can never have received credit for, even from the showman of a menagerie, who is seldom guilty of suppressing any of the marvellous deeds of his *protégés*. I am very much inclined to think, however, that no tiger made its appearance at Siely Gully on the day I allude to, although there is no doubt that they infest the neighbourhood. One saw his eyes glare, another plainly saw his tail above the grass, while a third heard him roar. This

evidence was certainly sufficient to have established a very formidable animal; but, as the party could not agree upon the roaring, the least difficult part to be deceived in, I felt myself bound to dismiss the case, and I reached my boat again in safety. I conceive, therefore, I was not far wrong.

Pattergotta, between Colgong and Sicly Gully, is a very pretty and interesting spot. Here, as I have said, the river winds deeply into the shore, making this place and Colgong mark the mouth of the bay; while the rocks in the bed of the stream rise like a miniature Ailsa Craig near the entrance to a very "wee" Loch Ryan. On that part of the rock that juts from the shore into the river are carved many figures of Hindoo gods and their attributes; and as we sailed near to it, I observed a faquir sitting among them, apparently in contemplation of matters above this world; for he fixed his eyes upon the sun, and seemed to heed little some passing observations that we made to him.

A short time before dusk we reached Rajmahal, and anchored close beneath the walls of its

ruined palace: it must have been very extensive, and its appearance from the river very grand, and in a noble situation for a royal residence. The foundation, on which its outer wall rests, is all of rock; a great rarity indeed throughout India. All the way from Chunar to this spot, and from hence to Calcutta, there are no rocks to be found but those that are between Colgong and Rajmahâl. The Sultan Sujah, who built this palace, was brother to Aurengzebe, and it was erected, I think, in 1630; an ancient building in this country certainly: when it was abandoned, I do not remember. There is now but one apartment in a perfect state, and that is a most beautiful one, with two smaller ones leading from it: they open over the river, and command a magnificent view.

Night closed in without my noticing it, before I had explored the ruined halls and desolate quadrangles; and I might have been lost in the labyrinth of little apartments and broken terraces, if I had not called lustily for a light from my boat, which was moored close below them. Marble seemed to have been lavished in great

profusion upon all the chambers: where the roof had disappeared, and exposed the courts to the air, it was a complete wilderness; and as the rooms would afford admirable shelter to robbers, so might the courts to tigers and snakes.

My boatmen scrambled up different parts of the wall, and ran in numbers through the place, shouting and laughing; while I followed, with most unromantic caution, attended by my old lamp-bearer, whose frequent stumbles threatened to plunge me into darkness, and leave me to seek adventure without an esquire. The crew, however, soon joined in my train; and seemed so pleased with the echo they had created, that we left the Sultan Sujah's palace with "loud whoop and holloa," for they continued it till the last.

It is near this place that the tomb erected to the memory of Mr. Cleveland (which has been so often noticed) stands; and I think this memorial of a useful man generally excites more interest than the vestiges of splendour in its neighbourhood. It would be fortunate, were it oftener so. I should have been glad to have found the

means of visiting the highlanders of these hills, and compared them with my friends of the Himalaya; and I look forward, at some future period, should I ever revisit these scenes, to gratify this desire: but it is not easy in a country of such extent, where only a few months in the year can be safely used for travelling, to say, "I will go here, or go there;" and where there is so much to remind us of "the vanity of human wishes," my forming such a desire is tolerably presumptuous.

The Rajmahal hills are mere hillocks, compared even with the first range of the Himalaya: indeed, they do not appear above half the height of the mountains at the mouth of the Clyde: but from the rarity of such sights here, we are disposed to view them with more respect. My servants (who, now that they draw so much further from the field of their great exploits, consider more highly of the feat) cannot disguise their contempt of the little mountains of Rajmahal, to which they once looked, I have no doubt, with great veneration.

It seemed to give delight to all the people in

[illegible]

Upon our arrival a passing sailor told us that the ship was in the harbor. We went to the shore of the harbor and found the ship at its entrance. There was a strong wind against us, and it required all the power that I was master of to make the ship go on with it. I was anxious at the prospect of spending twenty-four hours at a harbor, which he would have been too glad to have done. After we had passed the prospect of the Ragnahall hills, there

was nothing in the least degree inviting on the shores of the Ganges : high reeds upon a sandy soil, with banks so much above the water, that the roof of my boat was frequently lower than them, alone met the eye.

My manjee and crew were disposed to make a jubilee of our entrance upon the Bhagirutty, which is the most important branch of the Ganges, although it loses its name for the more holy one, by which the river within the mountains is also called. Here the Delta of the Ganges commences the eastern or main stream, which we have just left, running on past Dacca, till it joins the Megna. From Allahabad to this spot it is about six hundred miles ; and even now, when the water is at its least depth, I have every day, in my descent from that city, met with so many vessels, that I have been constantly in a crowd, some of them tiny frigates in full sail, floating as safely as if they had been in the midst of the sea.

I had no reason to refuse the petition of my crew ; and I made them a present, to do honour to the occasion of their quitting the great branch



for the most sacred one. They strung a garland of flowers on the prow of the boat, and sprinkled it with water from the venerated stream; and thus decorated, we floated merrily down. The head of the boat was cut to resemble an alligator; and a large eye was painted on each side. The vessels are generally carved in imitation of fish, and are seldom without their eyes; they have this custom in common with some parts of the Mediterranean; and, indeed, a *speronaro* is very little different in appearance from a large panchway, nor are its sailors much more courageous than the dandees, as I can testify from experience, having been once driven into the island of Stromboli in a slight gale of wind, from which we could not induce our crew to put off for four days, although there was very little sea, and nothing more than a good breeze remained.

The banks are much prettier, and more thickly interspersed with villages than those on each side of the main stream; and there is a greater concourse of people towards the river, particularly of women, who are very active in carrying

water. Both sexes wear finer and whiter clothes, and remain a longer time at their toilette after bathing. The men do not cut their hair, but allow it to grow long behind, as the women do, and are obliged to wait till it becomes dry enough to turn up: besides, they have to paint themselves in all manner of ways, and of all shades, before their daily dressing can be deemed complete. It is a ludicrous sight, to see a string of fellows squatting upon the shore with a small glass in their hands, "picking" out their figures with yellow, white, or red, as the case may be, or their castes may require. It is not the custom for the women to do this, although it is difficult to obtain a glimpse of their countenances to judge from; a red line, between the division of their hair in front, being the only mark I have observed, which is used to denote marriage.

My sirdar could not resist the opportunity of being marked; and, having gone early in the day to bathe, when a little below Jungypoor, which we passed this morning, he returned to me such a figure, that I had some difficulty in recognising him. He had several streaks of

yellow on his forehead, in the centre of which was a white circle, a line of yellow on his nose, round his ears, and on his cheeks, with three of the same colour, I think, on the tips of his shoulders, and his chest. I do not remember seeing him similarly distinguished in the upper provinces, though in all respects a very rigid Hindoo. The natives of Orissa and Bengal, who are the most scrupulous in their own provinces, are prone enough to pass slightly over many necessary rites when away from home: they resemble strongly, in this, most of their Christian brethren, who are always very glad to avail themselves of the license of the proverb, "When in Rome, do as they do in Rome."

The first place of any size in the Bhagirutty is Jungypoor, which is a large and bustling town. The river was full of vessels of all descriptions, and a custom-house boat pushed off immediately on our appearing, to board us. The peon had a book, which he presented to me to write my name in, and which exhibited a long catalogue of travelling *Sahib Logue*. The villages are very picturesquely situated among palm-trees

and mangoes. The houses are thatched or roofed with mats; and pumpkins creep about them, and enliven their appearance with the yellow blossom or the ripening fruit; while a little cluster of plantain-trees, with their graceful leaves, stands near every cottage.

Nothing can exceed the cleanliness of these houses. There is generally a verandah in front, the floor of which is of earth, plastered with chunam, and quite hard and free from dust. Here the women sit to grind corn, two at one stone; and I need not observe how interesting such a sight must be. Almost every domestic custom of this country is a scriptural illustration. I have seldom observed one woman carry more than one pitcher of water from the river: a great portion of the day, therefore, must be passed in the *trajet* backward and forward: neither is the practice itself so common on the shores of the Ganges, as on those of the Nile: and there they have a much greater distance to come, their villages being situated on the skirt of the cultivated land. I have counted five pitchers of a good size at one time, upon the per-

son of an Egyptian female ; one on the head— one on the left shoulder, held on by the left hand—the third in a sling at the back, which is kept on by a band passing over her forehead—the fourth on the right shoulder, and the fifth in the hand ; and, thus loaded, the pitchers are brought many times to the stream without being broken.

I think, although the banks of the Nile are much richer, I should give the preference to the scenery of the Ganges within the province of Bengal. To those who love to lead a simple life, I would recommend a cottage beneath the broad leaves of the plantain, or in the neighbourhood of a copse of bamboo, on the banks of the Bhagirutty. I should be very much inclined to exclaim, in the words of the song,—

If there's peace to be found in this world,  
A heart that is humble may look for it here.

for, of all quiet situations on earth, these are the quietest.

We anchored on the left bank of the river at sunset, about midway between Jungypoor and

Moorshedabad. Some large tamarind trees grew near the river ; while a grove of the areca palms stretched, like a forest of high masts, beyond it. In the branches of the tamarinds were crowds of large bats, hanging in clusters by their feet, and so tenacious of their hold, that all the noise and beating of the tree we made did not induce them to relinquish it : I believe they are the vampire bat, and are quite harmless. They have a most singular appearance when hanging in the way I have described : as the night sets in, when they drop from their perch, and flit about, they seem formidable enough, although at first they start with considerable awkwardness. Buffon, I remember, thinks it likely that these creatures furnished the notion of the harpies to the ancients. They are certainly as disagreeable as those animals could have been : and I should be loth, indeed, to see them assail my table. I believe, however, they confine themselves entirely to vegetable food, and make sad havoc in a fruit-tree.

Among other destructive creatures on the banks of the river, are innumerable white ants.

Their nests are the most extraordinary erections, when considered as the work of such little insects: but what cannot a multiplication of power perform? They are often four feet high, full of peaks, and perforated with countless chambers: it would take a strong arm, with a pick-axe, some time to demolish one. Beneath the shadow of a tree near me there is a very large one, in which the work seems to be still going forward: as they carry on their operations, however, under a covert way, you cannot watch them as they creep in and out. I am reminded by it of the situation of a poor Yogee in a Sanscrit play, translated by Sir William Jones, "*Sacontala, or the Fatal Ring.*" He had sworn to stand all his life under the branches of the tree, and kept his resolution so religiously, that he moved not even when the white ants commenced building at his feet: their structure rose higher and higher every day; until, at length, the virtue of the poor ascetic became a dire necessity. He was enclosed in the building; and, to the last moment of his life, "the ants they crept in, and the ants they crept out,"

and his voluntary suffering must have been as severe as his heart could have wished.

These ants are not so often seen in houses in this part of India, as I have noticed elsewhere. In the interior of Ceylon they swarm to such a degree, that they have been known to bring the roof of a house down; and the floors teem so with them, that if you leave any thing (a pair of shoes, for instance,) upon them, they will destroy it in no time. The ground in the neighbourhood of Candy is so covered with their nests, that you might fancy the city surrounded with the *tumuli* of former days. Indeed, that town is so infested with insects and vermin of all descriptions, that it is appalling to think of them. During a shower of rain, I have seen scorpions rush out of their hiding-places by threes and fours at a time, and crawl about the floor of my rooms; lizards creeping at all times on the walls; tremendous spiders weaving away in the corners: white ants sapping the floors, or eating into the roof; leeches stealing under the legs of my trowsers, or up the sleeves of my coat; while the rat or snake amuses itself with hunt-



ing its prey, "up stairs, down stairs, and in my lady's chamber," till driven to take refuge in the very bed itself.

These things, however, are more formidable in description than (strange to say!) they become in reality; for habit so soon reconciles you to them, that you look with perfect indifference at all the mighty host. The snakes that travel about the house, are of a very harmless nature, and do a great deal of good in clearing it of the more troublesome inmates, the rats, which are beyond all number, and so bold, that it is no easy matter to control their freaks.

January 1st.—This is New-Year's day; and I pass it in solitude, although in the midst of a populous stream, if I may say so. I have passed the city of Moorshedabad, and am near the cantonment of Burhampore, below the scene of the beautiful festival of the Bherah, which I witnessed some years ago, and have already described. There is some officer engaged, I believe, in erecting a new palace for the Nawab, which is not yet finished; for the same ill-looking, unroyal building still stands on the banks

of the river—a model of bad taste, but, I think, of some originality, which may, haply, be a redeeming point. We have certainly not introduced a very high order of architecture into our possessions in this country: for which, in a great degree, however, the climate must be responsible. I cannot conceive any thing more ugly than a British cantonment at Burhampore, Dinapore, or any of the other “pores:” and the architects of such extraordinary piles cannot plead the having sacrificed ornament for comfort; for few contrivances could have been devised better calculated for heat, and less adapted for the admission of air, than the quarters of the unfortunate officers who garrison these stations.

There is generally a king's regiment at Burhampore; and it is one of the neatest of the stations in outward appearance, particularly along the bank of the river, above which there is a delightful walk, where the only pure air is to be inhaled. On the inner side, the country is very beautiful and rich in all oriental trees and

shrubs: there are some fine rides about it, and the wooded lanes in the neighbourhood of Chumpa Poca, may remind you of similar green retreats in our own country. Here the Resident at the court of Moorsshedabad has a magnificent house. A native bazaar extends along the ghaut of Burhampore, and behind it are huts enough to constitute a good-sized village: which, to my mind, with its numerous plantain-trees and creeping pumpkins, is a far prettier object than the flat-roofed white houses of the Europeans, which tower beside them.

The bazaar is unfortunately too attractive, and the boatmen are assembled there in noisy crowds. I am kept awake by the discordant sounds of the tom-tom, and divers stringed instruments, with the furious accompaniment of their voices:—alas for such melody! The pier is thronged with boats of all descriptions, many of them occupied by invalids going to Calcutta, to embark for England—not before they require it, poor fellows!

Soldiers do not generally wish to return home

after having spent any number of years in India : and, indeed, they are so unfitted for the colder climate, that they would be miserable in the exchange. Those men who are obliged to go from the country, on account of their health, to be discharged, are very much to be pitied. They are just enough spoiled by their residence in the East, to prevent their being able to do any thing for themselves on their return ; and lead, I fear, sad lives.

January 3rd.—Yesterday, at noon, I quitted Burhampore ; and went so quickly down the stream, that I had no great cause to complain of its want of variety ; for between that place and Hoogly, where the river makes a very pretty bend, all is sufficiently uninteresting. Hoogly is now only distinguished for giving its name to this branch, the most navigable and best-known one of the Ganges. After quitting it, we seem to enter another world : town after town arises—magnificent houses, villages without end, and ships from all parts of the world. It is difficult to conceive a more agreeable prospect than the

sail downwards, with the wind and tide in your favour, as I have had it; passing, in quick succession, Chandernagore, Serampore, Barrackpore, Chinsurah, and village after village, embosomed in fruit-trees, with pagodas, tombs, and ghauts. The contrast between a bustling town and the quiet Bengallee hamlet, is great indeed; and it may be said, in praise of their inhabitants, that they do not seem to be spoiled by their vicinity to comparative riot and dissipation; for they are as simple in their habits, as much devoted to their customs, as in spots most removed from the haunts of foreigners. The system of castes appears to be well calculated to inspire content: their greatest misery would be a change of manners.

It was past ten at night before we anchored at the ghaut nearest the fort of Calcutta, where I remained until this morning, the 4th. I have been exactly thirty days travelling from Ghurmoktesar to Fort William—a distance, I think, of twelve hundred miles; and although a month is a long time to pass in a little boat

like mine, (that, however, was my own fancy.) I would not forego the pleasure I have received from a sail through so large and interesting a portion of Hindostan, for ten times the inconvenience.

I shall conclude with one circumstance, that, I think, will serve to corroborate what I have elsewhere said, about the attachment of the natives to their masters. Their gratitude, I know, is frequently impeached; and, from what I have observed, unjustly. I meant to have discharged several of the least useful of my servants immediately, and told them that I should do so. They besought me, with one voice, to permit them to remain with me, until my final departure; not, as they said, for the sake of "eating my salt," but for the pleasure of seeing me to the last. I should have considered this a proper eastern compliment, and been disposed to receive it as such, but for the earnestness with which the request was made. Although I did not agree to keep them, their sincerity was proved by their daily visits,

THE END.













